

UNIVERSITÉ DU QUÉBEC À MONTRÉAL

CHANGEMENTS CLIMATIQUES ET MODERNISATION ÉCOLOGIQUE : UN
NOUVEAU DISCOURS SOUS BARACK OBAMA?

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RÉSUMÉ

En arrivant à la Maison-Blanche en 2008, Barack Obama promettait de s'attaquer de manière décisive aux changements climatiques. En plus de proposer une politique climatique ambitieuse, le nouveau président articulait cette politique de façon originale. En effet, il la présentait comme étant un moyen de satisfaire les intérêts économiques et sécuritaires des États-Unis. Certains auteurs ont suggéré qu'en adoptant une telle conception de la lutte aux changements climatiques, Obama se serait en fait approprié un discours environnemental particulier, celui de la modernisation écologique. Ce discours avance l'idée selon laquelle les enjeux environnementaux et économiques sont compatibles. Bien que l'hypothèse de ces auteurs s'avère intéressante, elle n'a jamais été démontrée de manière rigoureuse dans la littérature scientifique. Ce mémoire cherche à combler ce vide en posant la question suivante : « Dans quelle mesure le discours environnemental tenu par Barack Obama durant son premier mandat à propos des changements climatiques peut-il être apparenté à celui de la modernisation écologique? » La thèse avancée est que même si durant la campagne présidentielle de 2008 et au début de son mandat son discours environnemental présentait quelques idées centrales de la modernisation écologique, celles-ci apparaissaient de moins en moins souvent dans son discours à partir de 2010, et ce, jusqu'aux élections de 2012. Afin de démontrer cette proposition, une analyse de discours d'un corpus de dix textes a été réalisée. La comparaison des résultats de cet exercice a permis de constater que le discours environnemental d'Obama cadrait effectivement au début de ses quatre années au pouvoir avec la modernisation écologique, mais que celle-ci a ensuite perdu en importance dans les propos de l'occupant de la Maison-Blanche. De plus, vers la fin de son mandat, Obama a embrassé le discours prométhéen, soit un discours qui prétend que la protection de l'environnement ne peut que nuire à la prospérité économique et qu'il faut donc prioriser cette dernière. Enfin, il a été démontré que l'échec du Sénat à adopter l'*American Power Act* de 2010, les élections de mi-mandat de 2010 ainsi qu'une série de circonstances s'étant produites en 2011 permettraient en partie d'expliquer l'évolution de discours du président.

Mots clés : changements climatiques, modernisation écologique, Barack Obama, analyse de discours, États-Unis

INTRODUCTION

Le 2 juin 2008, au moment où il assurait sa nomination en tant que candidat présidentiel pour le parti démocrate, Barack Obama (2008) affirmait : « *I am absolutely certain that generations from now, we will be able to look back and tell our children that [...] this was the moment when the rise of the oceans began to slow and our planet began to heal.* » Une telle déclaration ne laissait à l'époque aucun doute quant à l'intention du candidat Obama d'engager pleinement les États-Unis dans la lutte internationale aux changements climatiques. Le *New York Times* rappelait d'ailleurs en 2010 qu'Obama était arrivé à la Maison-Blanche comme un « sauveur climatique » (Maron et Lehmann 2010). Walter A. Rosenbaum (2011, 364) notait pour sa part que puisque la lutte aux changements climatiques constituait la pierre angulaire de sa plate-forme environnementale, les attentes étaient particulièrement élevées.

De plus, le programme d'Obama paraissait d'autant plus ambitieux que le contraste avec celui de son prédécesseur était considérable. Paul G. Harris (2009, 969) soutenait en effet que l'administration de George W. Bush s'était affairée pendant huit ans à investir abondamment de ressources pour prévenir toute action de lutte aux changements climatiques. À l'échelle des États-Unis, elle se contentait d'encourager le développement technologique, alors qu'au niveau international, elle bloquait les efforts de coopération en exigeant systématiquement une plus grande participation des grands pays en développement comme la Chine et l'Inde (Skodvin et Andresen 2009, 267-268).

La politique du nouveau président par rapport aux changements climatiques ne s'avérait pas seulement différente par son contenu, mais aussi par la manière dont elle était présentée.

En effet, les arguments qu'il utilisait étaient basés sur une logique fort différente de celle du précédent occupant de la Maison-Blanche. Par exemple, certains auteurs affirmaient que durant la campagne présidentielle de 2008 et au début de son mandat, Obama articulait sa politique climatique¹ comme un moyen de satisfaire les intérêts économiques et sécuritaires des États-Unis (Román et Carson 2009, 58-59; Bomberg et Super 2009, 438-439; Carson et Román 2010, 400-401). D'autres chercheurs allaient plus loin en avançant que ce nouveau discours relevait de la modernisation écologique, un discours originaire d'Allemagne soutenant que la croissance économique et la protection de l'environnement sont compatibles (Feindt et Cowell 2010, 204 - 205; Carson 2012, 77). Le contraste était effectivement immense avec W. Bush puisque celui-ci justifiait son inaction climatique en argumentant que la lutte aux changements climatiques imposerait des coûts économiques trop grands aux États-Unis (Schlosberg et Rinfret 2008, 257). John S. Dryzek affirmait que cette manière de défendre le statu quo relevait d'un discours qu'il qualifiait de « prométhéen ». Ce discours, qui aurait longuement dominé aux États-Unis et qui y garderait encore une grande importance, indiquait que la protection de l'environnement ne pouvait que nuire à l'économie et qu'il faudrait donc prioriser la croissance économique (Dryzek 2005, 62). Les élections de mi-mandat de 2010 auraient d'ailleurs marqué un retour en force de ce discours au sein du parti républicain, comme en témoignèrent le rejet des changements climatiques et l'antienvironnementalisme marqué de ses candidats aux élections du Congrès (Carson 2012, 77).

Considérant le fait que le discours prométhéen occupe toujours une place cruciale dans les débats environnementaux aux États-Unis, il est surprenant de constater que certains auteurs suggèrent qu'Obama présentait sa stratégie climatique en adoptant un discours qui s'y opposait entièrement. Ces auteurs ne fondent cependant pas leur affirmation sur une analyse rigoureuse des propos du président. En effet, aucune recherche scientifique n'a testé la thèse selon laquelle le discours environnemental d'Obama relevait de la modernisation écologique. Ce mémoire vise à combler ce vide en posant la question suivante : « Dans quelle mesure le

¹ Afin d'alléger le texte, l'expression « politique climatique » sera utilisée au lieu de « politique de lutte aux changements climatiques ».

discours environnemental tenu par Barack Obama durant son premier mandat à propos des changements climatiques peut-il être apparenté à celui de la modernisation écologique? »

La thèse avancée sera que même si durant la campagne présidentielle de 2008 et au début de son mandat son discours environnemental présentait quelques idées centrales de la modernisation écologique, celles-ci apparaissaient de moins en moins souvent dans son discours à partir de 2010, et ce, jusqu'aux élections de 2012. L'objectif de ce mémoire sera donc d'analyser les propos d'Obama afin de déterminer de quelle manière ils ont évolué entre sa nomination comme candidat démocrate à l'élection présidentielle de 2008 et la fin de l'élection de 2012.

Afin de démontrer cette thèse, ce mémoire sera divisé en trois chapitres. Le premier sera celui de la mise en contexte. Il abordera d'abord les origines et les conséquences des changements climatiques ainsi que les efforts internationaux pour y faire face. Ensuite, une recension de la littérature brossera un portrait des différentes façons d'analyser la lutte aux changements climatiques aux États-Unis. Ce tour d'horizon mènera à la question de recherche. Enfin, les fondements théoriques et méthodologiques nécessaires à la vérification de la thèse seront détaillés. La méthodologie proposera principalement de procéder à une analyse de discours en trois étapes.

Le deuxième chapitre se concentrera sur l'analyse de discours. Il aura pour but de réaliser les deux premières étapes de la méthodologie. La première étape consistera en l'analyse d'une série d'allocutions d'Obama à propos des changements climatiques afin d'y repérer la présence de certains discours environnementaux. La seconde, quant à elle, aura pour objectif de synthétiser les résultats de la première étape dans le but d'évaluer l'importance relative qu'occupent les différents discours environnementaux dans chaque allocution.

Le troisième chapitre, pour sa part, présentera la dernière étape de la méthodologie. Cette étape consistera à comparer les conclusions de la deuxième étape afin de déterminer si le discours environnemental prédominant les allocutions d'Obama a évolué au cours de son

mandat. Cet exercice permettra d'identifier les changements dans le discours d'Obama. Par la suite, les changements observés seront expliqués à la lumière des événements et des circonstances qui auraient pu exercer une influence sur l'occupant de la Maison-Blanche.

En guise de conclusion, un retour en arrière sur la question de recherche s'imposera d'abord pour vérifier si les précédents résultats permettent de confirmer ou d'infirmer la thèse. Le choix du cadre théorique de ce mémoire sera ensuite évalué afin de juger s'il était approprié. Enfin, une analyse d'un texte d'Obama datant de 2013 sera effectuée dans le but de déterminer si la tendance observée au troisième chapitre s'est poursuivie ou si son discours a de nouveau changé suite à sa réélection en novembre 2012.

CHAPITRE I

PROBLÉMATIQUE, CADRE THÉORIQUE ET MÉTHODOLOGIE

1.1 Problématique générale : La lutte aux changements climatiques

Même si cette recherche s'intéresse à la lutte aux changements climatiques aux États-Unis, il importe tout d'abord de se pencher sur la question globalement. Plus précisément, cette section présentera l'enjeu des changements climatiques de manière plus générale ainsi que les efforts internationaux qui ont été faits pour y faire face.

1.1.1 L'enjeu des changements climatiques

Pour comprendre l'enjeu des changements climatiques², il faut tout d'abord définir ce qu'est l'effet de serre. Ce phénomène naturel est celui où certains gaz dans l'atmosphère laissent entrer la radiation arrivant du soleil, mais ne permettent pas à la radiation provenant de la surface de la Terre de s'échapper. Le résultat est que la température de l'atmosphère s'avère considérablement plus élevée qu'elle le serait autrement, ce qui produit des conditions propices à la vie sur la planète. Les principaux gaz impliqués dans ce phénomène, les gaz à effet de serre (GES), sont la vapeur d'eau, le dioxyde de carbone (CO₂), les

² Dans la littérature, l'expression « changements climatiques » est parfois écrite au singulier, mais elle sera au pluriel dans ce mémoire.

chlorofluorocarbures (CFC), le méthane (CH₄) et l'oxyde nitreux (N₂O) (Bodansky 1993, 455-456; Paterson 1996, 9).

Selon le Groupe d'experts intergouvernemental sur l'évolution du climat (GIEC)³, depuis le début de la révolution industrielle (autour de l'année 1750), la concentration des GES dans l'atmosphère a considérablement augmenté. Cette plus grande concentration a déjà provoqué un accroissement de la température moyenne du globe et une élévation du niveau de la mer au cours du XXe siècle. Le GIEC (2007, 36-41) attribue ainsi la responsabilité des changements climatiques aux activités humaines⁴.

Encore selon le GIEC, si le rythme actuel de croissance des émissions de GES se poursuit, le réchauffement s'accroîtra et modifiera profondément le système climatique au XXIe siècle. Il note par exemple que les conséquences suivantes sont probables : vagues de chaleur plus fréquentes, fortes précipitations plus régulières, progression de la sécheresse, augmentation de l'activité cyclonique intense (ex. : les ouragans) et incidence accrue des épisodes d'élévation extrême du niveau de la mer (GIEC 2007, 44-56). Le Rapport Stern, un document analysant les aspects économiques des changements climatiques pour le gouvernement britannique, indique que ces catastrophes auront des impacts sévères sur les populations à travers le monde (Stern et al. 2006, chap. 3, p. 84). Plus particulièrement, dans les pays en développement, ils contribueront entre autres à exacerber la pauvreté (Stern et al. 2006, chap. 4, p. 114-115). Dans les pays développés, ils imposeront des coûts économiques considérables aux sociétés (Stern et al. 2006, chap. 5, p. 17-18).

³ Le GIEC est un organisme international ayant pour mission « d'évaluer les informations scientifiques relatives au changement climatique, de mesurer les conséquences environnementales et socioéconomiques de ce changement et de formuler des stratégies de parade réalistes. » (GIEC 2007, iii) Depuis sa création en 1988, il publie de manière périodique des rapports (1990, 1995, 2001, 2007 et 2014) faisant état des connaissances sur le sujet et servant de référence.

⁴ Cet élément est important puisque des changements climatiques peuvent aussi se produire de manière naturelle. L'expression sera cependant utilisée dans ce mémoire pour décrire ce qui résulte de l'activité humaine. Par contre, il faut dire que cette interprétation est encore contestée, principalement aux États-Unis où plusieurs rejettent les changements climatiques entièrement ou nient la responsabilité humaine (Rosenbaum 2011, 368-373).

Afin de limiter ces conséquences, le GIEC ajoute qu'il s'avère possible d'atténuer les effets de l'évolution du climat en réduisant les émissions de GES (GIEC 2007, 58-61). Principalement, il s'agit de s'attaquer au CO₂ puisqu'il demeure de loin le premier coupable. Le GIEC note par ailleurs qu'en 2004, ce gaz représentait 73,9 % des émissions totales de GES. Il précise aussi que l'utilisation des combustibles fossiles⁵ engendre 76,6 % des émissions de CO₂ (GIEC 2007, 36). De plus, ces sources d'énergie sont responsables d'une part considérable des émissions d'autres GES (CH₄ et N₂O). La réduction de la consommation des combustibles fossiles s'impose donc comme le principal moyen de lutter contre les changements climatiques.

Paterson (1996, 13) ajoute que puisque les combustibles fossiles servent surtout à produire de l'énergie, la lutte aux changements climatiques est avant tout une question énergétique. En d'autres mots, pour abaisser les émissions de GES, il faut diminuer l'utilisation des combustibles fossiles ou trouver des solutions de remplacement pour générer de l'énergie. Ce constat explique pourquoi aux États-Unis les débats énergétiques et climatiques sont fortement imbriqués.

1.1.2 Les efforts internationaux

Les changements climatiques se seraient imposés comme enjeu politique global en 1988, notamment après une présentation sur le sujet par le scientifique de la NASA (*National Aeronautics and Space Administration*), James Hansen, devant un comité du Sénat des États-Unis (Bodansky 1993, 461). Les événements de 1988 auraient entre autres mené à la création du GIEC ainsi qu'à des négociations internationales qui auraient permis la signature de la Convention-cadre des Nations unies sur les changements climatiques (CCNUCC) lors de la Conférence des Nations unies sur l'environnement et développement (CNUED) à Rio de Janeiro en 1992 (Paterson 1996, 1). La CCNUCC a pour principal objectif de servir de cadre juridique aux efforts internationaux de lutte aux changements climatiques afin de réduire les émissions de GES à un niveau correspondant aux capacités naturelles de la planète.

⁵ Le charbon, le pétrole et le gaz naturel.

Bodansky (1993, 454 - 455) précise que cette convention a déçu plusieurs personnes à l'époque puisqu'elle restait vague et ne forçait pas les États à limiter leurs émissions de GES.

C'est le Protocole de Kyoto, adopté dans la ville éponyme au Japon en 1997, qui devait pallier cette faiblesse en imposant des cibles de réduction d'émissions de GES aux pays développés⁶ (Bodansky 2010, 231). Avec ce traité, ceux-ci s'étaient engagés à diminuer leurs émissions de six GES (principalement le CO₂) de 5 % entre 2008 et 2012 par rapport à l'année de référence, 1990 (Sussman 2004, 363). Même si le protocole est entré en vigueur en 2005, son rejet, en 2001, par le président des États-Unis de l'époque, George W. Bush, aurait nui considérablement aux efforts internationaux puisque ce pays était alors le plus grand émetteur de CO₂⁷ (Harris 2009, 969). W. Bush avait pourtant promis durant sa campagne présidentielle de 2000 de régler les émissions de carbone des producteurs d'énergie.

Suite à l'entrée en vigueur du protocole, plusieurs personnes se demandaient quelle devrait être la marche à suivre après 2012. L'avenir du régime climatique devait finalement être déterminé à la conférence de Copenhague en décembre 2009. Plusieurs souhaitaient voir l'adoption d'une autre série d'engagements de réduction d'émissions de GES. Selon Bodansky, de telles attentes étaient irréalistes puisqu'il y avait eu peu de progrès dans les négociations au cours des mois précédents la conférence. Le résultat de cette grande rencontre internationale a effectivement été un accord politique ne contraignant pas les États à agir. Même si cette entente incluait tous les gros émetteurs comme les États-Unis et la Chine, elle s'avérait malgré tout décevante par rapport aux espoirs de certains (Bodansky 2010, 230-231).

Cet échec est digne d'intérêt puisqu'Obama est arrivé au pouvoir en proposant un ambitieux programme climatique un an avant la conférence de Copenhague. Tandis qu'au

⁶ Il s'agit des pays membres de l'Organisation de coopération et de développement économiques (OCDE) ainsi que des anciennes républiques soviétiques d'Europe de l'Est

⁷ La Chine a dépassé les États-Unis comme principal émetteur de CO₂ en 2006 (Rosenthal 2008).

niveau international, les États-Unis sous W. Bush étaient perçus comme l'un des principaux obstacles aux négociations, il semblait raisonnable de s'attendre à ce que le processus débloquerait avec l'entrée en fonction du nouveau président. Considérant ce revers et le fait qu'il n'y a pas eu d'autres développements majeurs au niveau international depuis Copenhague, il est désormais nécessaire de se pencher sur le cas des États-Unis.

1.2 Problématique spécifique : Les changements climatiques aux États-Unis

L'enjeu des changements climatiques étant complexe et contesté aux États-Unis, il n'y a pas qu'une seule manière de le concevoir. Par exemple, certains expliquent la réticence de ce pays à diminuer leurs émissions de GES par la dynamique de sa politique intérieure, alors que d'autres y voient une conséquence de la dépendance structurelle de l'État au capital. Ainsi, une recension de la littérature s'impose afin de faire le point sur les débats théoriques sur le sujet. Cette revue s'intéressera principalement aux écrits portant sur Obama. Plusieurs autres recherches sur la politique climatique des États-Unis en général ont également été incluses lorsqu'elles semblaient utiles pour illustrer et comprendre l'état de la question sous Obama. Suite à cet exercice, trois manières différentes d'étudier la lutte aux changements climatiques aux États-Unis ont été identifiées dans la littérature, les approches (1) réaliste, (2) discursive et (3) néogramscienne.

1.2.1 L'approche réaliste

L'étiquette réaliste⁸ n'est pas revendiquée par les auteurs de cette approche. Elle provient d'Hajer qui l'utilise pour désigner le type d'analyses étant en opposition avec sa propre approche discursive. Il affirme que l'approche réaliste considère que les problèmes environnementaux existent de manière objective et cherche à expliquer pourquoi les progrès environnementaux tardent à venir (Hajer 1995, 16).

La résolution Byrd-Hagel

Depuis que la résolution Byrd-Hagel a été adoptée à l'unanimité (95-0) au Sénat le 25

⁸ Même si l'approche réaliste décrite ici a certains points en commun avec la théorie réaliste en relations internationales, il ne s'agit pas de la même théorie.

juillet 1997, plusieurs auteurs cherchent à expliquer pourquoi les sénateurs de l'époque étaient tous en accord sur la question climatique. Selon cette résolution, les États-Unis ne seraient jamais partie à un traité lui imposant des cibles de réduction de ses émissions de GES si celui-ci n'imposait pas aussi des cibles aux pays en voie de développement ou s'il pouvait causer de sérieux dommages à l'économie (Skodvin et Andresen 2009, 266 - 267). Considérant le fait que le Sénat doit ratifier tout traité international, l'administration Clinton ne pouvait ignorer cette résolution. Le Protocole de Kyoto, qui ne respectait pas les conditions de Byrd-Hagel, n'a donc jamais été ratifié (Harris 2009, 969).

Les auteurs de l'approche réaliste expliquent l'unanimité des sénateurs par les efforts de lobbying des industries qui se sentaient les plus menacées par Kyoto⁹. Celles-ci auraient financé des campagnes pour convaincre la population américaine que ce protocole mènerait à des pertes d'emploi et à une augmentation du prix de l'essence (Agrawala et Andresen 2001, 128-129). Elles se seraient également plaintes auprès des élus que cette entente internationale leur imposerait un fardeau trop lourd au nom de l'environnement (Sussman 2004, 352). Guri Bang et ses collaborateurs (2005, 293) résument bien le tout en affirmant que la division des coûts de conformité de Kyoto désavantageait trop certains acteurs économiques importants. La pression politique sur les sénateurs aurait donc été trop intense pour qu'ils acceptent de ratifier ce traité.

Les intérêts matériels

Dana R. Fisher (2006, 469) critique cette approche puisqu'en se concentrant sur le lobbying, un aspect social dans le processus politique, les différents chercheurs négligent l'influence des aspects matériels sur ce même processus. Afin de pallier cette faiblesse, elle propose de considérer l'impact de l'abondance de ressources énergétiques présentes aux

⁹ Le plus important lobby des années 1990 était le *Global Climate Coalition* et il regroupait principalement des pétrolières et des fabricants automobiles.

États-Unis dans la décision de ce pays de refuser de réduire ses émissions de GES¹⁰ (Fisher 2006, 470). En se basant sur les résultats d'un vote sur une législation climatique au Sénat datant de 2003, elle conclut que la dépendance de plusieurs États américains au charbon¹¹ expliquerait en grande partie l'opposition de nombreux sénateurs (Fisher 2006, 488). La logique est que l'adoption d'une politique climatique pourrait nuire de manière substantielle à l'industrie du charbon et donc aussi aux économies des États qui en dépendent. Selon cet argument, la lutte aux changements climatiques resterait difficile tant et aussi longtemps que le charbon conserverait son importance aux États-Unis.

Quelques années plus tard, Skodvin et Andresen (2009, 264) utilisent l'approche réaliste à leur tour en défendant la thèse selon laquelle Obama devrait surmonter le blocage au Sénat pour mener à bien ses ambitions climatiques. Ils rappellent que la structure de cette institution ainsi que la procédure du *filibuster*¹² donnent une influence démesurée aux sénateurs représentant de petits États (Skodvin et Andresen 2009, 271-272). Puisque plus de la moitié des États produisent du charbon ou du pétrole, il s'avérerait ainsi très difficile d'obtenir suffisamment de votes pour faire adopter une législation climatique. Obama devrait donc impérativement offrir aux sénateurs de ces États des compensations législatives pour arriver à ses fins (Skodvin et Andresen 2009, 277).

Bref, selon l'approche réaliste, une politique climatique n'aurait pas été mise en place aux États-Unis à cause de la prédominance des intérêts liés aux combustibles fossiles dans ce pays. Il importe de rappeler que les intérêts sont ici définis en termes pécuniaires. Ce type d'analyse sous-entend donc que la lutte aux changements climatiques et la protection de l'environnement en général ne sont pas compatibles avec la prospérité économique.

¹⁰ Il est important de rappeler que déjà en 1996, Matthew Paterson (1996, 80-81) avançait que l'abondance de ressources énergétiques aux États-Unis avait un impact significatif sur sa réticence à participer à la lutte aux changements climatiques.

¹¹ Des trois combustibles fossiles, le charbon est de loin celui qui émet le plus de GES.

¹² Le *filibuster* est une procédure d'obstruction parlementaire qui permet à un sénateur d'allonger le débat aussi longtemps qu'il le désire pour empêcher le vote sur un projet de loi d'avoir lieu. Il faut une majorité de trois cinquièmes pour clore le débat et passer au vote. En pratique, il faut donc 60 votes pour faire adopter un projet de loi.

1.2.2 L'approche discursive

Cette approche, comme son nom l'indique, est centrée autour du concept de discours. Dryzek (2005, 9) définit ce concept comme étant une façon partagée d'appréhender le monde¹³. Chaque discours offre une manière particulière de concevoir le lien entre la nature et la société. Ainsi, l'incompatibilité entre la protection de l'environnement et la prospérité économique ne serait pas un fait objectif, mais plutôt le résultat de la prédominance d'un discours en particulier, le discours prométhéen¹⁴. Aux États-Unis, Reagan et W. Bush auraient été ses principaux défenseurs (Dryzek 2005, 62). En modifiant le discours environnemental dominant, il serait donc possible de changer la perception que les élus ont de leurs intérêts. Selon plusieurs auteurs, c'est précisément ce qu'Obama aurait tenté de faire en présentant sa politique climatique comme étant compatible avec la prospérité économique des États-Unis.

La lutte aux changements climatiques comme opportunité

Dans leur analyse de la politique environnementale défendue par Obama durant la campagne électorale de 2008 et le début de son premier mandat, Bomberg et Super (2009, 425-428) notent entre autres que le président formulait les enjeux environnementaux et énergétiques et ses engagements pour leur faire face presque exclusivement en termes d'intérêts économiques et sécuritaires. Ainsi, même si ce n'est pas le propos principal de l'article, les auteurs sous-entendent qu'Obama décrivait la lutte aux changements climatiques comme étant compatible avec l'économie et la sécurité des États-Unis.

Román et Carson présentent cette idée explicitement dans leur rapport pour la Commission du développement durable de Suède. Ils résument de cette façon leur interprétation de la politique climatique défendue par Obama au début de son mandat :

In spite of the struggling economy, Mr. Obama has taken several steps which emphasize his previous commitments, leaving no doubt about the

¹³ Le concept de discours sera défini en profondeur plus loin.

¹⁴ Ce discours sera défini en détail plus loin, mais il est surtout important de savoir pour le moment qu'il considère la protection de l'environnement comme une entrave au libre marché et donc à la croissance économique.

Administration's seriousness about climate change. Especially interesting is the way measures to combat global warming are now being contextualized and framed rhetorically by the Administration, and how that rhetoric is being put into practice. Mr. Obama has shifted the discourse about climate change policies from being a potential threat to the economy, to instead being an important means for pulling the US out of the economic crisis. Investments in infrastructure and renewable energy, the Administration argues, will create millions of new jobs and also increase US competitiveness in the long run. (Román et Carson 2009, 57)

Ainsi, la politique climatique qu'il proposait devait s'inscrire dans un grand plan stratégique de redressement et de développement économique (Román et Carson 2009, 58-59; Carson et Román 2010, 400-401).

En résumé, les auteurs affirment qu'Obama présentait sa politique climatique comme une opportunité économique et non comme un coût. Cette manière de concevoir la protection de l'environnement s'apparente au discours de la modernisation écologique.

La modernisation écologique aux États-Unis

Le discours de la modernisation écologique défend l'idée selon laquelle la protection de l'environnement et la prospérité économique ne sont pas incompatibles. Afin de résumer cette idée, certains auteurs utilisent l'expression « un jeu à somme non nulle », alors que d'autres préfèrent la formule « *pollution prevention pays* » (Hajer 1995, 26; Langhelle 2000, 205-206; Dryzek 2005, 167).

Considérant cette définition, Feindt et Cowell (2010, 201) affirment que les promesses électorales d'Obama ainsi que son plan de relance après la récession de 2008 étaient caractéristiques de la modernisation écologique. Abondant dans le même sens, Carson (2012, 77) déclare que le discours d'Obama était similaire à celui de la modernisation écologique. Toutefois, même si ces propositions peuvent sembler évidentes en voyant ce qui a été dit ci-dessus, aucune démonstration rigoureuse n'est offerte. Au contraire, plusieurs auteurs ont souligné avant l'arrivée d'Obama que la modernisation écologique n'a jamais été très populaire aux États-Unis pour différentes raisons (Dryzek et al. 2002, 667; Dryzek 2005, 177-178; Schlosberg et Rinfret 2008, 255). De plus, seul l'article de Schlosberg et Rinfret (2008)

traite exclusivement de la modernisation écologique aux États-Unis et il a été publié en avril 2008, donc avant la campagne présidentielle de la même année.

1.2.3 L'approche néogramscienne

Afin de comprendre les difficultés à arriver à une entente internationale de lutte aux changements climatiques, les auteurs Levy et Egan (1998, 339-340) partent de la théorie de l'hégémonie de Gramsci dans le but de préciser les mécanismes par lesquels le capital influence les États. Ils puisent entre autres dans les théories critiques de l'État pour démontrer que ceux-ci servent activement les intérêts des entreprises.

L'approche néogramscienne de Levy et Egan se démarque principalement par son analyse de la dépendance structurelle de l'État au capital qui exerce une influence indirecte et subtile sur les politiques gouvernementales. Cette dépendance viendrait de l'idée selon laquelle le rôle principal de l'État est de maintenir les conditions d'accumulation du capital puisque la légitimité des élus dépend principalement de leur capacité à faire prospérer l'économie. Considérant l'importance qu'ont les combustibles fossiles dans le capitalisme industriel, il s'avère que la réglementation des émissions des GES va à l'encontre des intérêts du capital (Levy et Egan 1998, 347). Newell et Paterson (1998, 693) ajoutent que le lien entre ces polluants et la croissance économique se voit particulièrement bien dans le fait qu'il demeure admis auprès des élus que l'augmentation de la consommation d'énergie reste fondamental à l'expansion de l'économie. C'est ainsi que ces auteurs déduisent que les industries liées aux combustibles fossiles bénéficient d'un pouvoir structurel. Dryzek et ses collaborateurs (2002, 665-666) arrivent à une conclusion comparable en argumentant que les enjeux environnementaux sont l'objet d'une grande résistance aux États-Unis parce qu'ils demeurent perçus comme étant en opposition avec l'un des impératifs de l'État, celui de la croissance.

Cette approche peut sembler a priori similaire à l'approche réaliste, mais un élément essentiel les distingue. L'approche réaliste s'intéresse aux formes d'influence directe comme le lobbying et reste entièrement aveugle aux influences indirectes, alors que l'approche néogramscienne étudie les deux. Cette dernière cherche entre autres à démontrer comment la

dépendance structurelle de l'État au capital rend les autorités très réceptives au lobbying des industries liées aux combustibles fossiles. Autrement dit, l'approche réaliste se penche uniquement sur le lobbying de ces industries, tandis que l'approche néogramscienne veut mettre en évidence les conditions qui permettent fondamentalement à ces entreprises d'exercer une grande influence sur les politiques gouvernementales.

Levy et Egan traitent aussi de modernisation écologique. Ils l'abordent cependant de manière différente de l'approche discursive. Ils soulignent qu'à cause d'une série de développements qu'ils n'explicitent pas, l'industrie a été forcée d'être accommodante au niveau climatique afin de stabiliser sa position. Elle aurait donc permis la mise en place de politiques climatiques timides en présentant un discours qui rendrait les intérêts des entreprises et les intérêts environnementaux compatibles, c'est-à-dire le discours de la modernisation écologique (Levy et Egan 2003, 817-821). L'approche néogramscienne décrit conséquemment ce discours comme une stratégie de l'industrie, alors que l'approche discursive l'aborde comme une manière spécifique d'appréhender le monde.

1.2.4 Question de recherche

Suite à ce survol de la littérature, il est pertinent de noter que malgré le fait que les trois approches soient très différentes, elles abordent toutes d'une façon ou d'une autre le lien entre l'environnement et l'économie. L'approche réaliste soutient que les élus refusent d'appuyer la lutte aux changements climatiques à cause de l'influence des intérêts économiques liés aux combustibles fossiles dans ce pays. L'approche néogramscienne défend l'idée selon laquelle les États priorisent l'économie au détriment de l'environnement puisque leur fonction principale est de favoriser l'accumulation du capital. Enfin, l'approche discursive estime que le rapport entre l'environnement et l'économie varie d'un discours environnemental à l'autre et qu'aux États-Unis la prédominance du discours prométhéen a pour effet de les mettre en opposition. Ainsi, d'une façon ou d'une autre, la protection de l'environnement et la prospérité économique sont présentées comme étant incompatibles. Selon les différents auteurs des trois approches, cette dichotomie se manifesterait principalement aux États-Unis.

Il n'est donc pas surprenant de voir plusieurs chercheurs affirmer que la modernisation

écologique, un discours environnemental fondé sur l'idée que l'environnement et l'économie peuvent être conciliables, n'a jamais été très populaire aux États-Unis. Il serait surtout répandu dans certains pays d'Europe et particulièrement en Allemagne d'où ce discours serait issu. Il faut cependant souligner que l'état des connaissances sur l'influence de la modernisation écologique aux États-Unis est très limité puisque très peu de travaux en traitent.

De ce point de vue, un certain scepticisme s'impose lorsque des auteurs prétendent que le discours environnemental d'Obama sur le climat est similaire à celui de la modernisation écologique. Leurs affirmations sont d'autant plus difficiles à vérifier qu'elles ne reposent sur aucune démonstration poussée ou recherche scientifique. En effet, leurs arguments sont anecdotiques et font habituellement référence à un seul document. Il semble donc y avoir une sérieuse lacune dans la littérature, qui ne contient aucune analyse réellement systématique et rigoureuse du discours environnemental d'Obama.

1.3 Cadre théorique et concepts

Afin de répondre à cette question de recherche qui consiste à savoir dans quelle mesure le discours environnemental tenu par Barack Obama durant son premier mandat à propos des changements climatiques peut être apparenté à celui de la modernisation écologique, l'approche discursive décrite plus haut sera utilisée. Les prochaines sections permettront de mieux définir cette approche ainsi que les concepts qui seront employés dans ce mémoire.

1.3.1 Le concept de discours

Pour Dryzek, les problèmes environnementaux sont avant tout complexes. Plus précisément, ils sont doublement complexes, puisqu'ils se trouveraient à l'intersection des écosystèmes et des systèmes sociaux humains (Dryzek 2005, 8-9). Feindt et Oels abondent dans le même sens en affirmant : « *Environmental problems are not self-evident, they imply complex systemic interdependencies, they often build up over long time intervals and large spatial areas.* » (Feindt et Oels 2005, 162) Dryzek (2005, 9) soutient aussi que cette complexité entraîne nécessairement un accroissement des façons de concevoir la nature et les problèmes environnementaux. En effet, plus il y a de points de vue, plus il devient difficile de

prouver que l'un ou l'autre s'avère erroné. Ainsi, la diversification des préoccupations environnementales depuis les années 60 aurait engendré une prolifération des perspectives sur les problèmes environnementaux. Afin de donner un sens à cette multiplication, Dryzek emploie le concept de discours.

La définition de discours¹⁵ qui sera utilisée dans ce mémoire est fortement inspirée de celle de Dryzek (2005, 9). Un discours sera considéré comme une façon partagée d'appréhender le monde qui, étant inscrite dans le langage, permet à ceux qui y souscrivent d'interpréter des fragments d'information afin de les rassembler en récits cohérents. Ainsi, un discours construit des significations et des relations qui délimitent le « bon sens » et savoir légitime. Comme Hajer (1995, 44), il importe de distinguer la présente définition du concept de discours du sens commun du mot « discours ». Celui-ci signifie dans ce mémoire « une manière d'appréhender le monde », alors que dans la vie de tous les jours, ce mot fait référence à « un développement oratoire en public, traitant d'un sujet déterminé ». Afin d'éviter toute confusion, le mot « texte » sera utilisé pour désigner le sens commun du mot « discours ». Ainsi, pour faire référence à « un discours prononcé par Obama » (selon le sens commun), l'expression « un texte présenté par Obama » sera plutôt employée.

Les discours environnementaux représentent donc des façons particulières de concevoir le rapport entre la nature et la société. Ceux-ci reposent sur une ontologie et une série d'hypothèses et de jugements qui permettent de définir la place spécifique qu'occupe la nature par rapport au reste de la société. Considérant cela, les discours environnementaux ne concernent pas uniquement les environmentalistes. En effet, toute personne se trouvant confrontée à des enjeux environnementaux doit y donner un sens. La façon dont elle les conceptualise s'avère donc aussi être un discours environnemental, et ce, même si cet individu s'estime hostile à l'environmentalisme.

¹⁵ Plusieurs autres définitions du concept de discours sont proposées par des auteurs qui s'intéressent aux discours environnementaux. Celles de Litfin (1994) et celle de Hajer (1995) sont intéressantes, mais elles s'avèrent moins appropriées aux besoins de ce mémoire.

1.3.2 La construction sociale de l'environnement

Puisque ce mémoire consistera principalement en une analyse de discours, il est important de rappeler que ce type d'analyse est particulièrement fréquent chez les auteurs qui emploient des approches associées au constructivisme social. Ces approches ont entre autres en commun une attitude critique par rapport à la « vérité » (Sharp et Richardson 2001, 194; Hajer et Versteeg 2005, 176).

Dans le cas des études portant sur l'environnement, une telle posture théorique signifie que la nature et les problèmes environnementaux n'ont pas de définitions objectives. L'idée n'est pas ici de dire qu'ils n'ont pas d'existence propre en dehors de leur construction sociale.

Au contraire, comme le mentionnent Feindt et Oels :

Saying that environmental problems are socially constructed does not mean that there are no illnesses, malnutrition, loss of species and natural beauty, floods, etc. caused by contaminated water and polluted air, by drought, logging or a rising ocean level. Instead, it means that there is not one authoritative interpretation of the events but multiple contested interpretations. (Feindt et Oels 2005, 162)

Dryzek (2005, 12) résume le tout en soulignant que les problèmes environnementaux existent, mais qu'ils n'ont pas de « nature » non interprétée. Hajer et Versteeg (2005, 176) abondent dans le même sens en affirmant qu'avec une approche interprétative, ce n'est pas le phénomène environnemental en lui-même qui est important, mais plutôt la manière dont la société donne un sens à cet événement. Les discours environnementaux sont ainsi en quelque sorte des guides offrant des façons spécifiques de concevoir les différents enjeux environnementaux.

Considérant le fait qu'une perspective particulière sur la nature peut favoriser les intérêts de certains acteurs au détriment de ceux du reste de la société, le lien entre discours et pouvoir est crucial pour ces auteurs. En effet, Dryzek (2005, 9) cite Foucault pour souligner que les discours conditionnent les perceptions et les valeurs de ceux qui les subissent, ce qui permet de privilégier certains intérêts et d'en supprimer d'autres. C'est pourquoi Hajer et Versteeg (2005, 179-180) concluent que les acteurs puissants, qui voient leurs intérêts menacés par un discours émergent, peuvent essayer de bloquer ce développement en faisant la promotion d'un discours concurrent. Qui plus est, d'autres auteurs soutiennent que la

politique environnementale serait une lutte pour l'hégémonie discursive dans laquelle les acteurs tentent d'imposer leur définition de la réalité (Hajer 1995, 59; Sharp et Richardson 2001, 194).

Avant d'aller plus loin, une référence additionnelle aux travaux de Foucault s'impose. En effet, la plupart des chercheurs traitant de discours environnementaux abordent les écrits du philosophe français. Même si l'approche décrite pour ce mémoire est inspirée de Foucault, elle s'en distingue sur deux points. D'une part, Dryzek (2005, 23) rejette l'idée selon laquelle les discours seraient impénétrables. En effet, il considère que les individus ne sont pas entièrement soumis aux discours et sont en mesure de prendre du recul afin de les évaluer de manière critique. D'autre part, Foucault présente souvent les discours en termes hégémoniques. Une telle conception signifie qu'il n'y aurait de la place que pour un seul discours à un moment et un endroit particuliers. Au contraire, Dryzek (2005, 23) insiste sur la multiplicité des discours environnementaux qui se complètent et se contredisent.

1.3.3 Une typographie des discours environnementaux aux États-Unis

Puisque l'objectif de ce mémoire est de déterminer si le discours environnemental d'Obama s'apparente à celui de la modernisation écologique, l'analyse pourrait se contenter de comparer les principes de base de ce discours aux propos d'Obama. Il s'avère toutefois plus intéressant de situer ses paroles dans un cadre plus large afin d'évaluer quels autres discours environnementaux y occupent une place importante. C'est pourquoi l'utilisation d'une typologie, c'est-à-dire une classification des différents discours environnementaux présents aux États-Unis, s'impose. L'idée n'est cependant pas de se doter d'une typologie exhaustive, mais plutôt de s'assurer que cette typologie comporte un nombre assez restreint de discours pour être opérationnelle, mais assez large pour couvrir les principaux points de vue sur l'environnement aux États-Unis.

Puisqu'elles ne s'intéressent pas uniquement aux États-Unis et/ou incluent trop de discours, les quelques typologies existantes ne sont pas adaptées à la présente recherche. Il est donc nécessaire de développer une typologie originale en se référant à la littérature sur le sujet. La typologie qui suit est principalement inspirée des écrits de Brulle (2000) et Dryzek

(2005). Dans une moindre mesure, les travaux d'Hajer (1995), Schlosberg et Rinfret (2008) et Carson (2012) ont aussi eu une influence. Trois discours ont ainsi été choisis : le discours survivaliste, le discours prométhéen et la modernisation écologique.

Avant de procéder à la définition de ces discours environnementaux, deux notions doivent être précisées. D'une part, le concept d'« élément discursif » doit être introduit. Un élément discursif est une idée fondamentale qui caractérise un discours spécifique. L'essence d'un discours peut donc être capturée en présentant ses principaux éléments discursifs. Pour chaque discours, il est important de les mettre en évidence puisqu'ils seront indispensables à l'analyse. D'autre part, les discours représentent des idéaux types qui ne sont jamais repris intégralement par les acteurs des débats sur l'environnement. Ils sont définis en termes absolus, car ils ne servent que de références.

Discours survivaliste

Le discours survivaliste a pris forme au début du mouvement environnementaliste durant les années 60 et 70. Il repose sur une prémisse très simple : la Terre possède une quantité limitée de ressources naturelles et a une capacité également limitée d'absorber la pollution. En d'autres mots, la planète a des limites environnementales. En supposant que la taille de l'économie et la population ne cessent d'augmenter, il paraît inévitable d'atteindre éventuellement des limites (Dryzek 2005, 27-30). Les auteurs de la recherche « *The Limits to Growth* » ont tenté de démontrer cette hypothèse en 1972 avec une série de simulations par ordinateur (Meadows et al. 1972). Leurs conclusions d'inspiration malthusienne étaient sans équivoques : dans l'éventualité où la croissance de l'époque se serait poursuivie indéfiniment, une limite aurait été dépassée après une centaine d'années, ce qui aurait mené à l'effondrement de la société industrielle et de la population terrestre. En fait, comme le résume Dryzek : « *The elaborate computer simulations really stated the obvious : exponential growth cannot go on forever in a finite system.* » (Dryzek 2005, 30-31)

Brulle (2000, 181) présente un discours quelque peu différent, mais ayant des bases similaires. Il l'appelle : « *Reform Environmentalism* ». Ce discours aborde aussi indirectement l'enjeu des limites environnementales en se référant à Malthus et aux chercheurs ayant repris

ses idées au 20^e siècle. Il accorde cependant plus d'importance à l'auteure de l'ouvrage « *Silent Spring* », Rachel Carson (1962). Selon Brulle, Rachel Carson a redéfini le lien entre la nature et l'humanité. À ce sujet, il cite Jim O'Brien « *This book crystallized two themes that were to be crucial to Reform Environmentalism : (1) nature has a delicate balance and (2) humans are part of it.* » (1983, cité par Brulle 2000, 183) Les discours présentés par Dryzek et Brulle ont donc plusieurs points en commun. Ils affirment tous deux que l'humanité dépend de la nature et qu'en détruisant celle-ci, les humains courent à leur perte. Le discours de Dryzek a cependant un ton plus apocalyptique, ce qui semble approprié puisqu'il reflète les propos alarmistes tenus par plusieurs environnementalistes. C'est pourquoi le nom « survivaliste » a été retenu.

Les deux professeurs avancent aussi que les partisans de ce discours n'ont pas su articuler une solution de rechange aux politiques actuellement en vigueur (Brulle 2000, 191; Dryzek 2005, 50). En effet, la majorité des moyens préconisés pour se conformer aux limites environnementales de la planète implique généralement deux propositions. : (1) un contrôle centralisé et autoritaire et (2) une gestion scientifique de l'environnement. En d'autres mots, leurs solutions consistent à utiliser des méthodes totalitaires pour faire respecter les limites dictées par la science. Le meilleur exemple demeure la suggestion d'imposer un encadrement strict à la croissance de la population des pays en développement. Même si de telles propositions se font plus rares, il reste que le discours survivaliste soutient que des changements radicaux peuvent être nécessaires pour contrer la crise environnementale.

Qui plus est, même s'ils ne le disent pas explicitement, leurs présentations donnent l'impression que le discours survivaliste exige des sacrifices de la part de la population pour être en mesure de sauver l'humanité. En effet, limiter la croissance économique implique habituellement une diminution du niveau de confort matériel des sociétés. De plus, les tendances autoritaires sous-entendent qu'il reste inévitable d'imposer certains changements, car selon ce discours, la population ne prendra pas d'elle-même les décisions nécessaires à sa survie.

Considérant cette définition du discours survivaliste, trois éléments discursifs permettent

de capturer son essence :

- La justification de la protection de l'environnement par la science. Puisqu'il faut respecter les limites dictées par celle-ci, les compromis peuvent être difficiles à atteindre.
- L'opposition entre la protection de l'environnement et la croissance économique. Puisque les conséquences appréhendées par un dépassement des limites de la planète seraient catastrophiques, l'environnement demeure prioritaire.
- Un ton apocalyptique et des solutions qui exigent des sacrifices. Dans la mesure où la destruction de l'écosystème terrestre serait fatale pour l'humanité, la protection de l'environnement devient un enjeu moral.

Discours prométhéen

Selon Dryzek (2005, 51 - 52), même si le discours prométhéen n'a été articulé explicitement qu'en réponse au discours survivaliste, il aurait dominé la conception occidentale de l'environnement depuis la révolution industrielle. En d'autres mots, puisqu'il était virtuellement accepté par tous dans les sociétés industrielles, il n'aurait jamais eu à être défendu avant l'émergence des préoccupations environnementales qui le remettaient en question. Brulle parle plutôt du discours de la Destinée manifeste qui aurait dominé la relation que les Américains entretiennent avec la nature depuis des siècles. Selon lui, ce discours aurait cependant pris la forme d'un contremouvement en réponse à l'environnementalisme aux États-Unis. Dès lors, il affirme que les débats environnementaux aux États-Unis consisteraient généralement en une opposition entre ce discours et l'environnementalisme (Brulle 2000, 115-116). Marcus Carson (2012, 75) le décrit aussi comme un contremouvement, mais en réaction à l'avènement du développement durable.

Peu importe l'origine du discours, les différents auteurs s'entendent pour dire qu'il repose sur deux prémisses. La première est une confiance infinie en la capacité de l'humanité et de sa technologie à surmonter les obstacles, incluant les problèmes environnementaux. Cette prémisses explique le nom du discours puisqu'elle peut être caractérisée de prométhéenne en référence au dieu grec du progrès et de la civilisation, Prométhée (Dryzek 2005, 51; Carson 2012, 75 - 76). La deuxième est la prémisses cornucopienne, en référence à la corne

d'abondance. En effet, le discours prométhéen prétend que la planète contient une quantité illimitée de ressources naturelles et pourrait absorber une quantité infinie de pollution (Brulle 2000, 115 - 116; Dryzek 2005, 51; Carson 2012, 75). Ces deux prémisses mènent inévitablement à la conclusion qu'il n'y a aucune raison d'entraver la croissance économique en se préoccupant des problèmes environnementaux.

Il faut aussi souligner que pour le discours prométhéen, la nature n'existe que comme réservoir de ressources (Brulle 2000, 115-116; Dryzek 2005, 57; Feindt et Cowell 2010, 204 -205). Contrairement à ce qu'avance la citation d'O'Brien à propos de Rachel Carson ci-dessus, les « prométhéens » jugent que l'humanité ne fait pas partie de l'équilibre délicat de la nature. Au contraire, le discours prométhéen est fondé sur une vision hiérarchique dans laquelle la civilisation domine la nature (Brulle 2000, 124; Dryzek 2005, 58).

Ce discours décrit aussi comme naturelle la compétition entre les humains. Elle resterait le meilleur moyen de stimuler l'innovation afin de trouver des solutions aux problèmes environnementaux. Considérant l'importance de cette compétition, le discours prométhéen n'accorde aucune place aux interventions de l'État. En fait, il présente le gouvernement comme inutile voire comme une nuisance (Dryzek 2005, 58-59). Il n'est donc pas surprenant de constater que ce discours défend le libre marché. Plus précisément, il soutient l'idée selon laquelle laisser les gens poursuivre leurs intérêts égoïstes permettrait de régler naturellement les problèmes environnementaux et ainsi gérer de manière optimale l'environnement. Il s'agit conséquemment d'appliquer aux enjeux environnementaux la métaphore de la main invisible d'Adam Smith (Brulle 2000, 126; Dryzek 2005, 59). Il est donc préférable d'ignorer les enjeux environnementaux puisqu'ils se corrigeront d'eux-mêmes ou tout simplement de nier leur existence.

Comme il a été mentionné dans la revue de littérature, ce discours est particulièrement présent aux États-Unis. Brulle expose longuement les différents mouvements opposés à l'environnementalisme qui ont soutenu un tel discours dans ce pays. Il aborde par exemple le « *Wise-Use Movement* » qui cherchait à la fin des années 1980 à renverser certaines

restrictions environnementales à l'utilisation des ressources et qui défendait l'idée selon laquelle le libre marché permettrait de mieux gérer la nature (Brulle 2000, 126-131). Dryzek (2005, 62-66) dépeint Reagan et W. Bush comme étant les figures de proue de ce discours et il souligne que le rejet du Protocole de Kyoto par ce dernier a été justifié par des arguments « prométhéens ». Enfin, Marcus Carson décrit pour sa part le sénateur James Inhofe comme étant un de ses plus fougueux militants. Il ajoute en outre que les élections de mi-mandat de 2010 représentent un retour marqué de ce discours au sein du parti républicain (Carson 2012, 77).

Considérant cette définition du discours prométhéen, trois éléments discursifs permettent de capturer son essence :

- La conviction selon laquelle l'État ne devrait jouer aucun rôle dans la protection de l'environnement. Puisque les problèmes environnementaux se rectifieront d'eux-mêmes, il est préférable de les ignorer ou de nier leur existence.
- L'opposition entre prospérité économique et protection de l'environnement. Cette dernière n'est perçue que comme une entrave au libre marché, ce qui nuit à la croissance économique.
- Une foi illimitée en la capacité de l'innovation et de la technologie de corriger les problèmes environnementaux.

Modernisation écologique.

Certains auteurs prétendent que la modernisation écologique¹⁶ a d'abord été identifiée en Allemagne au début des années 80 (Dryzek 2005, 167), alors que d'autres la présentent de manière plus générale comme étant une réponse à l'échec des politiques environnementales des années 70 (Hajer 1995, 31).

La prémisse de la modernisation écologique se présente ainsi : tout en reconnaissant que

¹⁶ Pour certains auteurs, la modernisation écologique est une théorie (Mol et Spaargaren 2000; Hannigan 2006), un discours ou un paradigme (Carson 2012). Peu importe l'appellation, les principes de bases demeurent les mêmes. Elle sera ici considérée comme un discours environnemental.

la problématique environnementale a un caractère structurel, il est présumé qu'elle peut être gérée dans le cadre des institutions existantes (Hajer 1995, 25). Plus précisément, ce discours propose de restructurer le capitalisme dans le but de le rendre compatible avec les préoccupations environnementales, mais sans le remettre en question (Dryzek 2005, 167). Pour ce faire, la modernisation écologique recommande d'intégrer les critères environnementaux au système afin d'encourager l'industrie à développer des pratiques moins dommageables pour l'environnement. Il incombe donc au gouvernement d'intervenir dans l'économie en instaurant des normes et en fournissant des mesures incitatives en collaboration avec l'industrie (Dryzek 2005, 169). Par exemple, l'État pourrait mettre en place une taxe sur le carbone, dans le but de pousser les acteurs économiques à réduire leurs émissions de GES. De plus, afin de guider cette transformation de manière cohérente, ce discours prône une approche systémique (ou holistique) par opposition à une approche fragmentaire¹⁷ (Dryzek 2005, 169-170).

Pourquoi les entreprises coopéreraient-elles? La modernisation écologique indique que la protection de l'environnement peut s'avérer payante (en anglais, « *pollution prevention pays* »). Que ce soit en rendant plus efficace la production, en prévenant les problèmes au lieu de les réparer ou en profitant du marché croissant des produits « verts », les entreprises ont intérêt à se soucier de l'environnement (Hajer 1995, 27-28; Dryzek 2005, 167-169). Ainsi, comme le mentionne Hajer (1995, 26), la protection de l'environnement est le résultat d'une logique utilitariste. Autrement dit, la décision de se préoccuper de l'environnement est motivée par un calcul de coût-bénéfice et non par des impératifs moraux.

Traditionnellement, une augmentation du produit intérieur brut (PIB) par habitant a toujours été accompagnée d'un accroissement de la pression sur l'environnement. Or, la modernisation écologique cherche à renverser cette tendance. En effet, en suivant les

¹⁷ Une approche systémique s'intéresse à la manière complexe dont la consommation, la production, l'épuisement des ressources et la pollution sont interreliés (Dryzek 2005, 169). L'approche fragmentaire considère au contraire tous ces éléments de manière indépendante, risquant ainsi de proposer des politiques contradictoires.

prescriptions de ce discours, il serait possible de découpler les deux, c'est-à-dire d'avoir une croissance sans impact sur l'environnement. Ceci aurait deux conséquences. D'une part, le concept de limite environnementale deviendrait inutile parce que la croissance pourrait se faire sans affecter la nature. D'autre part, puisque la protection de l'environnement serait désormais compatible avec l'objectif étatique de promotion de la croissance, il n'y aurait plus aucune raison de s'y opposer (Hajer 1995, 26; Dryzek 2005, 168). Ainsi, les principaux arguments des discours survivaliste et prométhéen s'en trouvent neutralisés.

La modernisation écologique accorde une place importante à la science et la technologie. La science ne sert pas seulement à identifier les problèmes environnementaux, mais aussi à guider l'élaboration des politiques en indiquant par exemple la quantité de pollution qu'un écosystème peut absorber de manière sécuritaire (Hajer 1995, 27). De plus, elle est à la base du principe de précaution¹⁸ qui est fondamental à ce discours. La technologie quant à elle, est la clé de voûte de la restructuration du capitalisme. En effet, ce discours soutient qu'en encourageant l'industrie à se préoccuper de l'environnement, celle-ci développera des technologies vertes, ce qui « verdirait » le capitalisme. C'est ainsi que ce discours avance qu'il est possible de découpler la croissance économique et la pression sur l'environnement (Mol et Spaargaren 2000, 20; Fisher et Freudenburg 2001, 702-703; Schlosberg et Rinfret 2008, 254; Feindt et Cowell 2010, 193).

La littérature abonde d'hypothèses cherchant à expliquer le peu de popularité dont bénéficie ce discours aux États-Unis, mais Schlosberg et Rinfret demeurent les seuls à décrire la forme que la modernisation écologique prend dans ce pays. Selon eux, deux idées¹⁹ se seraient ajoutées à ce discours aux États-Unis : une rhétorique qui insiste sur l'histoire américaine et son esprit d'innovation (Schlosberg et Rinfret 2008, 259) et l'addition du thème

¹⁸ Selon la Déclaration de Rio sur l'environnement et le développement de 1992 : « En cas de risque de dommages graves ou irréversibles, l'absence de certitude scientifique absolue ne doit pas servir de prétexte pour remettre à plus tard l'adoption de mesures effectives visant à prévenir la dégradation de l'environnement. » (CNUED 1992)

¹⁹ Il parle aussi du consumérisme américain, mais celui-ci ne sera pas présenté puisqu'il n'est pas utile à cette recherche.

de la sécurité. Ils traitent particulièrement de sécurité énergétique²⁰ qu'ils présentent comme étant compatible avec la lutte aux changements climatiques. Ainsi, la version américaine de la modernisation écologique soutient que la protection de l'environnement s'avère dans certains cas conciliable avec la prospérité économique et la sécurité (Schlosberg et Rinfret 2008, 261-265). Cette adaptation évacue cependant le principe de précaution qui reste fondamentale à la version originale. En effet, aux États-Unis, l'incertitude scientifique sert encore à justifier l'inaction plutôt que l'action (Schlosberg et Rinfret 2008, 269).

En résumé, c'est une approche avec laquelle il n'y a que des gagnants puisqu'aucun sacrifice n'est exigé de personne. Hajer (1995, 31-32) va même jusqu'à déclarer que la modernisation écologique transforme la signification de la crise environnementale : ce qui apparaissait initialement comme une menace au capitalisme devient le véhicule de son innovation. Considérant cette façon optimiste de concevoir les problèmes environnementaux, il n'est pas surprenant de constater qu'elle reste critiquée. Certains soutiennent que sa logique est « trop belle pour être vraie » (Fisher et Freudenburg 2001, 703), alors que d'autres indiquent que ce n'est qu'une stratégie rhétorique pour sauver le capitalisme et faire taire les revendications environnementales (Hajer 1995, 33-34; Dryzek 2005, 174). Hajer (1995, 34) souligne cependant que la modernisation écologique pourrait aussi être la première étape vers une société moderne durable. Le débat fait ainsi encore rage.

Considérant cette définition de la modernisation écologique, trois éléments discursifs permettent de capturer son essence :

- La compatibilité entre la protection de l'environnement, la croissance économique et la sécurité. La modernisation écologique juge donc inutile de choisir puisqu'il est possible d'avoir les trois.

²⁰ La sécurité énergétique a longtemps été un argument prométhéen afin de justifier l'exploitation des combustibles fossiles. La modernisation écologique propose plutôt de développer des énergies renouvelables afin de diminuer les importations de combustibles fossiles et ainsi, augmenter la sécurité énergétique du pays. Román et Carson (2009, 81) affirment que ces deux visions étaient présentes lors de l'élection présidentielle de 2008, alors que McCain défendait la première et Obama la seconde.

- La certitude que l'innovation scientifique et la technologie peuvent transformer le capitalisme en le rendant plus « vert ».
- La conviction que l'État a un rôle minimum à jouer dans la gestion des problèmes environnementaux. Il doit se contenter de mettre en place un cadre cohérent intégrant des critères environnementaux. À ce titre, le gouvernement doit privilégier une approche systémique/holistique.

1.3.4 Protection de l'environnement et prospérité économique

Considérant le fait que le principal point de différenciation entre les trois discours s'avère être la priorisation de la protection de l'environnement, de la prospérité économique ou des deux, il s'avère nécessaire de préciser ces concepts.

Protection de l'environnement

De manière générale, la protection de l'environnement se définit comme la préservation et la restauration de l'environnement naturel. Plus précisément, elle consiste en la restriction des activités qui dégradent l'environnement comme la pollution. En pratique, une telle définition est peu utile, car toute activité humaine a un impact sur l'environnement. Considérant cela, comment est-il possible d'évaluer qu'une politique protège l'environnement? Il faut d'abord noter que les conséquences de chaque activité ne sont pas toutes égales. Par exemple, un déplacement à vélo engendre une fraction de l'impact environnemental de l'utilisation d'une voiture. Ensuite, puisqu'il n'y a pas de critères objectifs permettant de déterminer ce qui constitue un impact acceptable, le seul moyen de procéder est par comparaison. En effet, le fait de remplacer une centrale au charbon par des éoliennes serait certainement bénéfique pour l'environnement, et ce, même si la production des turbines a causé un peu de pollution.

Cette logique peut cependant mener à des conclusions discutables. Le principal exemple est celui du gaz naturel aux États-Unis. Plusieurs considèrent que le gaz constitue une source d'énergie propre puisqu'il émet moins de GES que les autres combustibles fossiles (Gardiner 2011). Certes, en remplaçant une centrale au charbon par une au gaz naturel, le bilan est positif d'un point de vue environnemental, mais ce gaz demeure un combustible fossile

contribuant aux changements climatiques²¹. De plus, cette manière de qualifier le gaz naturel pose un risque de confusion entre énergie propre et énergie renouvelable. Alors que les deux sont généralement synonymes, ce n'est plus le cas si certains présentent le gaz naturel comme une énergie propre puisque c'est une source d'énergie non renouvelable.

Une politique sera donc considérée dans ce mémoire comme bénéfique pour l'environnement si elle permet de réduire de façon importante la dégradation de l'environnement. L'adjectif « importante » est fondamental ici, car une grande part de subjectivité ne peut être évitée. Il faut aussi ajouter que dans la mesure où cette recherche traite de la lutte aux changements climatiques, la promotion de l'exploitation du gaz naturel ne sera pas considérée comme une politique favorable à l'environnement. Selon la même logique, puisque le gaz naturel ne sera pas qualifié de « propre », énergie propre et énergie renouvelable redeviennent synonymes. Enfin, tout investissement dans les énergies renouvelables et dans l'efficacité énergétique constituera au contraire comme une politique bénéfique pour l'environnement.

Prosperité économique

Dans l'introduction de son livre, Dryzek (2005, 12) note que toutes les idéologies importantes qui ont vu le jour dans la société industrielle avant l'avènement de l'environnementalisme acceptaient la prémisse de ce qu'il appelle l'« industrialisme », c'est-à-dire un dévouement à la croissance de la production et de la consommation. En d'autres mots, comme l'indique l'approche néogramscienne, la croissance économique demeure l'un des principaux objectifs des gouvernements.

Prioriser la prospérité économique ou la croissance économique (les deux expressions seront utilisées comme synonymes) signifiera ainsi poursuivre dans cette voie en adoptant

²¹ Il est d'ailleurs intéressant de rappeler qu'une étude de 2011 affirmait que l'exploitation du gaz naturel par fracturation hydraulique, les gaz de schiste, pourrait émettre davantage de GES que le charbon (Howarth, Santoro et Ingraffea 2011). Même si cette étude a été fortement contestée, il demeure qu'elle remet en question l'idée selon laquelle le gaz naturel constitue une énergie propre.

des politiques ayant pour but de favoriser cette croissance. Cette logique implique nécessairement de rejeter les politiques qui pourraient freiner l'économie. Par exemple, les politiques environnementales sont souvent critiquées parce qu'elles imposeraient selon certains des coûts économiques considérables. Il sera donc soutenu qu'une politique priorise la croissance si elle n'a aucun impact négatif sur l'état de l'économie.

1.3.5 Représentation graphique de la typologie

À la lumière de ces définitions et de la présentation des différents discours, quelques remarques s'imposent. Premièrement, le discours survivaliste et le discours prométhéen sont en opposition sur pratiquement tous les points. Ils se contredisent principalement à propos de la priorisation de l'environnement ou de l'économie et sur la place du gouvernement pour régler les problèmes environnementaux. La modernisation écologique vise quant à elle à première vue à trouver un équilibre entre ces deux visions. Il est donc possible d'illustrer la typologie sur un graphique prenant la forme présentée dans la figure 1.1.

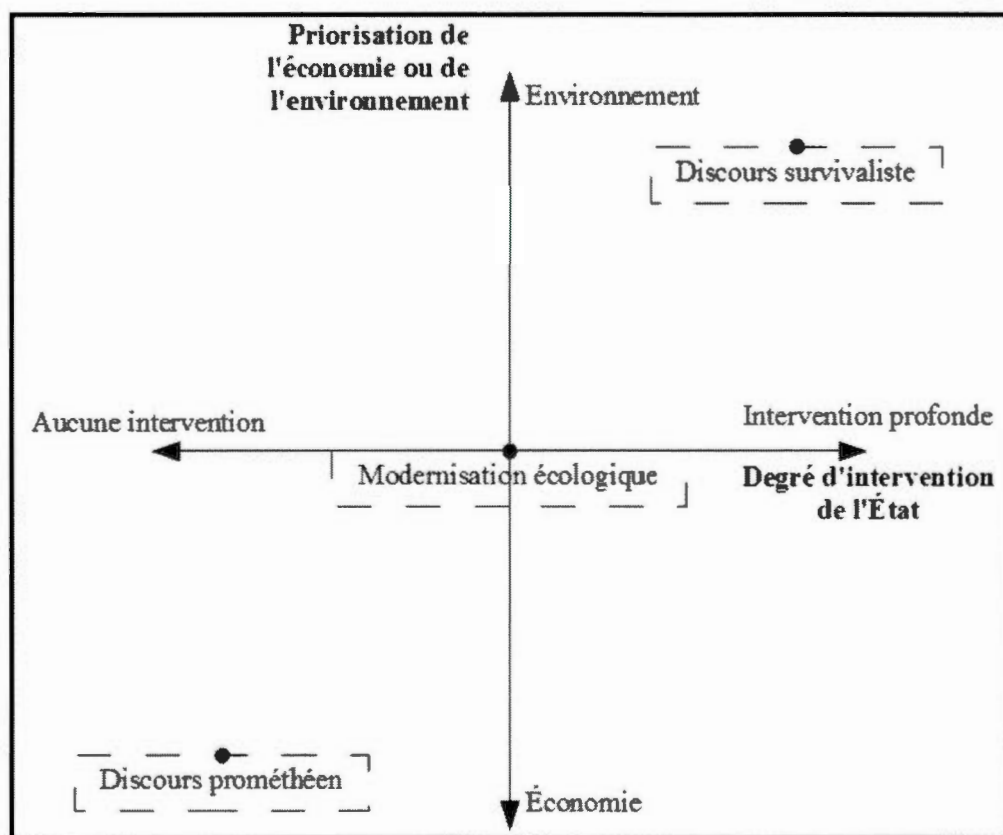


Figure 1.1 Représentation graphique de la typologie des discours environnementaux

Même si une telle représentation est attrayante par sa simplicité, un minimum de prudence s'impose puisque celle-ci cache d'importantes nuances. Principalement, elle n'expose pas les différences dans leurs visions du rôle de la science et la technologie ainsi que dans leurs conceptions de la nature. De plus, cette illustration ne précise pas le fait que le discours survivaliste décrit les problèmes environnementaux en termes moraux, que la modernisation écologique les définit en termes utilitaristes et que le discours prométhéen nie généralement leur existence. Enfin, elle peut porter à croire que la modernisation cherche à trouver un compromis entre environnement et économie, alors que ce n'est pas le cas. Selon la logique de ce discours, il est possible d'avoir les deux sans avoir à faire de concession. Cette représentation a malgré tout l'avantage de situer les discours les uns par rapport aux autres en un seul coup d'œil.

1.3.6 Les facteurs pouvant influencer le président

Il importe ici de rappeler que l'objectif de ce mémoire consiste à situer le discours environnemental d'Obama dans la typologie et à déterminer si celui-ci a changé durant son mandat. Si le discours environnemental du président a effectivement évolué, il s'avère également essentiel de comprendre ce qui aurait pu causer les changements observés. Afin de guider cette analyse, il est indispensable de se pencher sur la littérature abordant les facteurs pouvant influencer l'occupant de la Maison-Blanche. Cinq facteurs ont été identifiés.

Premièrement, il faut s'intéresser à la séparation des pouvoirs entre l'exécutif (la présidence), le législatif (le Congrès) et le judiciaire (les tribunaux). Il ne fait aucun doute que le système de « *checks and balances* » qui vient avec une telle séparation impose de grandes contraintes au président (Corbo et Gagnon 2011, 360). En d'autres mots, celui-ci ne peut agir sans considérer la position du Congrès et celle des tribunaux. En ce qui a trait à l'influence de ces institutions, la littérature traite davantage du rôle du Congrès. En effet, Neustadt confirme les propos de Corbo et Gagnon en affirmant : « *Their formal powers are so intertwined that neither will accomplish very much, for very long, without the acquiescence of the other.* » (Neustadt 1960, 37) L'influence de cette institution sur la présidence est particulièrement manifeste après les élections de mi-mandat puisque le président peut se retrouver confronté à une nouvelle majorité dans l'une ou l'autre des deux chambres. Par exemple, en prenant le contrôle de l'ensemble du Congrès lors des élections de mi-mandat de 2006, les élus démocrates ont pu promouvoir des politiques favorables aux changements climatiques, ce que le précédent Congrès républicain refusait de faire (Bang 2010, 1649). Un tel renversement de situation peut ainsi forcer le président à ajuster ses ambitions en évaluant ce que le nouveau Congrès peut lui permettre de réaliser.

Deuxièmement, la société civile peut aussi exercer une grande influence sur le président. Ce sont principalement « les innombrables groupes d'intérêt dont la fonction centrale est d'explicitier et de promouvoir les besoins, les désirs et les attentes des diverses composantes de la société civile » en maintenant une pression sur les acteurs politiques (Corbo et Gagnon 2011, 361). Il a d'ailleurs été souligné, dans la revue de la littérature, que les groupes d'intérêt liés aux combustibles fossiles ont eu un impact profond sur le débat climatique aux

États-Unis (Agrawala et Andresen 2001; Sussman 2004; Bang, Tjernshaugen et Andresen 2005). Dans un même ordre d'idée, Corbo et Gagnon (2011, 361) ajoutent spécifiquement que les puissantes forces économiques peuvent avoir une influence sur l'exercice des fonctions présidentielles.

Troisièmement, considérant les liens qui ont été présentés dans la typologie entre la protection de l'environnement et la prospérité économique, il est évident que l'état de l'économie peut significativement influencer le président. Feindt et Cowell notent à ce titre que la récession de 2008 a favorisé l'apparition d'un climat hostile à la protection de l'environnement. Ils ajoutent de manière plus générale : « *it is also the tendency that, in times of economic hardship, environmental concerns become seen as unaffordable, and political attention turns to saving jobs.* » Conséquemment, une économie qui bat de l'aile peut inciter les élus, incluant le président, à éviter d'aborder la question de l'environnement afin de concentrer ses efforts sur la création d'emploi. L'influence de l'état de l'économie sur la présidence est particulièrement manifeste pendant les élections présidentielles. En effet, comme le note Erikson (1989, 570) ainsi que Lewis-Beck et Stegmaier (2000, 211), une économie mal en point peut exercer une influence décisive sur le vote des électeurs lors du scrutin. Un président qui tente d'obtenir un second mandat durant une période économique difficile doit donc impérativement se concentrer sur cet enjeu pour espérer l'emporter. En résumé, l'état de l'économie peut forcer un président à mettre de côté d'autres priorités comme l'environnement, et ce, surtout lorsque celui-ci désire être reconduit dans ses fonctions.

Quatrièmement, des facteurs physiques peuvent avoir un certain impact sur le président. Corbo et Gagnon (2011, 362) notent par exemple que la géographie des ressources naturelles peut l'influencer. Comme il a été vu dans la synthèse de la littérature, la distribution des réserves de charbon aux États-Unis a eu un effet significatif sur le débat climatique (Fisher 2006; Skodvin et Andresen 2009). Les événements climatiques peuvent aussi avoir des conséquences considérables sur les élus. Par exemple, il semble que la sécheresse de 1988, qui était à l'époque la plus sévère aux États-Unis depuis les années 1930, aurait fortement contribué à rendre plus crédible la science des changements climatiques (Bodansky 1993,

461; Paterson 1996, 1). D'autres catastrophes du même ordre pourraient ainsi influencer les débats climatiques et donc, le président.

En dernier lieu, le président subit une influence directe de son entourage au sein de l'appareil gouvernemental (ex. : le vice-président, le chef du bureau présidentiel, les secrétaires des différents départements, les conseillers...). En effet, David (2004, 44) précise que :

La complexité croissante des affaires publiques et la nécessité pour les décideurs politiques de recourir aux connaissances d'experts sur des questions délicates sont à la base de la création et de la prolifération, depuis la Seconde Guerre mondiale, d'organismes consultatifs.

L'auteur note par exemple que les conseillers ont entre autres comme fonctions de : (1) « conseiller le gouvernement sur ses objectifs et ses priorités », (2) « concevoir des plans concrets d'action visant à réaliser les objectifs de la politique choisie » et (3) « simplifier et d'expliquer aux décideurs les variables importantes d'un problème afin d'en mieux comprendre les implications » (David 2004, 45-46). Ainsi, de plusieurs façons, l'entourage du président peut influencer directement la manière dont celui-ci appréhende les enjeux environnementaux et ses priorités. Par exemple, si le président est entouré de conseillers priorisant l'économie aux dépens de l'environnement, celui-ci pourrait avoir tendance à concevoir les problèmes environnementaux de manière « prométhéenne ». Il faut cependant dire que peu de recherche s'intéresse à l'influence de l'entourage du président dans l'élaboration de la politique environnementale aux États-Unis. C'est pourquoi il a été nécessaire de se référer à l'ouvrage de David portant sur la formulation de la politique étrangère.

1.4 Thèse

Il est important de rappeler la question de recherche de ce mémoire : « Dans quelle mesure le discours environnemental tenu par Barack Obama durant son premier mandat à propos des changements climatiques peut-il être apparenté à celui de la modernisation écologique? »

La thèse proposée défend l'idée selon laquelle le discours environnemental d'Obama a

évolué au cours de sa présidence puisque, même si durant la campagne électorale de 2008 et au début de son mandat son discours présentait quelques caractéristiques de la modernisation écologique, celles-ci sont apparues de moins en moins souvent dans son discours à partir de 2010, et ce, jusqu'au scrutin de 2012. En d'autres mots, Obama aurait effectivement eu un discours similaire à la modernisation écologique, mais seulement au commencement de son mandat, car avec le temps, il s'en serait éloigné.

1.5 Méthodologie

Afin de vérifier ou d'infirmer cette thèse, il sera nécessaire de comparer les propos tenus par Obama à différents moments au cours de son mandat. Cette comparaison permettra de déterminer comment son discours environnemental a évolué. L'analyse de discours semble être la meilleure approche pour mener à bien cet exercice. Par définition, celle-ci sert à mettre en évidence des structures discursives qui pourraient ne pas être apparentes aux yeux des gens participant aux débats (Hajer et Versteeg 2005, 175-176). Cette définition étant très générale, il est important de préciser que dans cette méthodologie, les structures discursives dont Hajer et Versteeg parlent seront en fait les différents discours qui ont été décrits dans la typologie. En d'autres mots, l'analyse consistera à mettre en évidence la présence de différents discours environnementaux dans les propos d'Obama afin de vérifier s'il y a eu des changements.

Concrètement, ce sont des textes présentés par Obama qui seront analysés. Dans le but d'éviter toute confusion, il importe de rappeler que dans ce mémoire, le mot « texte » fait référence au sens commun du mot discours, c'est-à-dire à « un développement oratoire en public, traitant d'un sujet déterminé ». Cette précision est essentielle puisque le mot discours désigne « une manière d'appréhender le monde ». Afin d'avoir un échantillon suffisamment large des propos d'Obama, les transcriptions d'un corpus de dix textes seront analysées et comparées.

Dans le but de déterminer comment le discours d'Obama a évolué, trois étapes seront nécessaires : (1) identifier les discours environnementaux dans chaque texte, (2) broser un portrait indiquant l'ordre d'importance des discours pour chaque texte et (3) comparer les

portraits entre eux pour identifier les changements. Après avoir décrit ces trois étapes, la méthode qui permettra d'expliquer l'évolution du discours d'Obama sera présentée. En dernier lieu, les critères de sélection des textes seront définis.

1.5.1 Analyse de discours

Étape 1 : Identification des discours environnementaux

Cette première étape s'appuiera sur la typologie des discours environnementaux comprenant trois discours caractérisés par trois éléments discursifs chacun, tels que détaillés ci-dessus. Il s'agira de distinguer les discours environnementaux dans les textes d'Obama en y décelant les différents éléments discursifs de la typologie. Fairclough (2003, 129) affirme effectivement qu'il est possible de repérer un discours en identifiant sa perspective particulière dans un texte. Cet auteur (2003, 128) souligne aussi qu'un texte peut englober différents discours. Les textes peuvent donc contenir des éléments discursifs de différents discours même si ceux-ci peuvent sembler contradictoires.

Cet exercice de repérage peut néanmoins devenir difficile puisque les différents éléments discursifs ne sont que rarement explicites dans les textes. En effet, ils sont habituellement sous-entendus. Il faudra conséquemment explorer au-delà du texte pour déceler les idées et les présuppositions qui y sont cachées. L'objectif n'est cependant pas de quantifier les éléments discursifs. Il s'agira plutôt de repérer ces éléments et d'explicitier le contexte dans lequel ils se présentent afin de comprendre comment Obama y fait référence. Cette nuance est essentielle puisque même si un élément discursif n'apparaît qu'une seule fois dans un texte, il peut malgré tout être fondamental s'il se trouve dans un passage clé de celui-ci. Procéder de cette façon permettra de juger de l'importance relative de chaque discours. Les textes seront analysés l'un à la suite de l'autre dans le but de faire ressortir les principaux éléments discursifs qui se retrouvent dans chacun d'eux.

Étape 2 : Importance relative des discours

Une fois les éléments discursifs repérés, il sera essentiel de synthétiser ces résultats afin de faciliter leur comparaison. À cette fin, un portrait de chaque texte résumant les précédentes conclusions sera produit. L'objectif est de dresser des portraits partageant une structure

identique, c'est-à-dire des portraits dans lesquels les résultats seront toujours présentés de la même façon. Il s'avérera ainsi plus aisé de déceler les changements dans les propos d'Obama.

Cette étape consistera donc à analyser les éléments discursifs identifiés, un texte à la fois, afin d'évaluer l'importance relative que chaque discours y occupe. Comme il vient d'être mentionné, l'importance d'un discours dans un texte ne se détermine pas uniquement par la fréquence d'apparition de ses éléments discursifs. Au contraire, il sera nécessaire de se référer au contexte dans lequel se trouve chaque élément dans le but de juger de leur importance. En procédant ainsi, il deviendra possible de déterminer l'ordre d'importance des discours dans chaque texte. Par exemple, dans un texte en particulier, le discours prométhéen pourrait dominer, alors que la modernisation écologique arrive en second et le discours survivaliste en dernier.

Les résultats de cet exercice seront présentés sous forme de tableaux (un pour chaque texte). L'ordre d'importance des discours y sera clairement indiqué et sera accompagné de courtes explications justifiant le rang de chacun d'eux. Les explications résumeront les éléments discursifs qui y seront présents. Avec un tel portrait pour chaque texte, il sera désormais plus facile de procéder à leur comparaison.

Étape 3 : L'évolution de l'importance relative des discours

La dernière étape consistera à comparer les portraits qui ont été faits de chaque texte de manière chronologique afin de déterminer de quelle façon la vision d'Obama a évolué. Concrètement, la comparaison se fera en deux temps.

Dans un premier temps, les ordres d'importance qu'occupe chaque discours dans les portraits seront comparés dans le but de déterminer si cet ordre a changé. L'objectif est d'évaluer si le discours occupant la plus grande importance est toujours le même ou s'il change d'un texte à l'autre. Dans un deuxième temps, il sera important d'aller au-delà de l'ordre d'importance en comparant les portraits dans leur ensemble afin de constater spécifiquement comment l'apparition des éléments discursifs varie d'un texte à l'autre. L'objectif de cette deuxième comparaison est de déterminer de quelle manière la présence

des éléments discursifs évolue indépendamment de l'ordre d'importance des discours. Par exemple, même si la modernisation écologique devait être le discours dominant dans tous les textes, il pourrait malgré tout s'avérer qu'Obama insiste de moins en moins sur les bénéfices économiques de la protection de l'environnement.

Enfin, les résultats de cette deuxième comparaison permettront de vérifier si la thèse est exacte. En effet, en repérant les éléments discursifs qui ont changé, il deviendra possible de déterminer comment le discours d'Obama a évolué. Il s'avère cependant pertinent de pousser l'analyse plus loin en expliquant les changements identifiés afin de mieux comprendre l'évolution du discours du président.

1.5.2 Explication des changements dans le discours d'Obama

Afin d'expliquer les changements dans le discours d'Obama, il sera nécessaire de remettre les textes dans le contexte de la politique américaine. Plus précisément, il s'agira de déterminer si certains événements et circonstances particulières ont pu exercer une influence sur le président. Puisqu'il y a peu de recherches scientifiques sur ce sujet, ces événements et circonstances seront principalement identifiés grâce aux textes d'actualité politique publiés dans les médias écrits aux États-Unis. L'impact sera évalué et défini à l'aide de la littérature sur les facteurs d'influence qui ont été décrits dans le cadre théorique : le Congrès, les groupes d'intérêt, l'état de l'économie, les facteurs physiques et l'entourage du président. Par exemple, la prise de contrôle de la Chambre des représentants par le parti républicain lors des élections de mi-mandat de 2010 pourrait avoir poussé le président à ajuster son discours pour qu'il tienne compte de la nouvelle réalité au Congrès.

L'identification des événements et des circonstances n'étant pas un exercice controversé, il ne semble pas nécessaire de faire un survol d'un échantillon de journaux représentatifs des différentes tendances politiques aux États-Unis. L'utilisation de grands quotidiens américains faisant une couverture exhaustive de la politique fédérale suffit, ce pourquoi le *New York Times* et le *Washington Post* ont été choisis. Dans une moindre mesure, d'autres sources ont cependant été consultées au besoin.

1.5.3 Sélections des textes

Puisque l'objectif est de décrire comment le discours environnemental d'Obama a évolué dans le temps, un échantillon des principaux textes dans lesquels il a abordé les questions environnementales lors de l'ensemble de son premier mandat est approprié. Plus précisément, les critères suivants guideront la sélection :

- Les textes doivent être des transcriptions de discours au sens conventionnel. Les documents de campagne électorale comme le programme démocrate sont exclus puisque l'objectif est d'évaluer l'évolution dans ce qui a été dit par Obama et non par son parti en entier. Cette nuance est essentielle, car les partis américains sont relativement hétérogènes : il y a donc des démocrates qui ne s'entendent pas nécessairement avec Obama sur les questions environnementales.
- Les textes doivent s'adresser à un auditoire national afin de s'assurer que leur contenu n'est pas entièrement adapté à une population spécifique ou régionale.
- Les textes doivent aborder de front la protection de l'environnement, les changements climatiques et/ou les enjeux énergétiques. Il importe d'inclure les enjeux énergétiques puisque comme il a été mentionné plus haut, la lutte aux changements climatique est principalement une question énergétique.
- Les textes doivent avoir été prononcés entre le 3 juin 2008, le moment où Obama est certain d'être le candidat démocrate au scrutin de 2008, et le 6 novembre 2012, le jour des élections. Le choix de la première date s'explique par le fait qu'elle marque le début de la campagne présidentielle pour Obama en 2008, alors que celui de la deuxième se justifie par le fait que cette date marque la fin symbolique de son premier mandat.

En considérant ces critères, dix textes ont été sélectionnés. Il y a environ deux textes par année. Ceux-ci sont présentés dans le tableau 1.1 et l'ensemble des transcriptions se trouve en appendice.

Tableau 1.1

Liste des textes d'Obama qui seront analysés

#	Titre	Lieu	Date
1	« <i>Obama's Speech in Lansing, MI</i> »	<i>Michigan State University, Lansing, MI</i>	4 août 2008
2	« <i>Remarks by the President on Jobs, Energy Independence, and Climate Change</i> »	Maison-Blanche, Washington, DC	26 janvier 2009
3	« <i>Remarks by the President Challenging Americans to Lead the Global Economy in Clean Energy</i> »	<i>Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Boston, MA</i>	23 octobre 2009
4	« <i>Remarks by the President on State of the Union Address</i> »	Capitole, Washington, DC	27 janvier 2010
5	« <i>Remarks by the President to the Nation on the BP Oil Spill</i> »	Maison-Blanche, Washington, DC	15 juin 2010
6	« <i>Remarks by the President on State of the Union Address</i> »	Capitole, Washington, DC	25 janvier 2011
7	« <i>Remarks by the President on America's Energy Security</i> »	<i>Georgetown University, Washington, DC</i>	30 mars 2011
8	« <i>Remarks by the President on State of the Union Address</i> »	Capitole, Washington, DC	24 janvier 2012
9	« <i>Remarks by the President on Energy</i> »	<i>Prince George's Community College, Largo, MD</i>	15 mars 2012
10	« <i>Remarks by the President at the Democratic National Convention</i> »	<i>Time Warner Cable Arena, Charlotte, NC</i>	6 septembre 2012

CHAPITRE II

ANALYSE DU DISCOURS ENVIRONNEMENTAL DE BARACK OBAMA

L'objectif de ce chapitre est de procéder à une analyse de discours des textes qui ont été sélectionnés au précédent chapitre. Plus précisément, les démarches définies dans les deux premières étapes de la méthodologie seront effectuées pour chacun des textes choisis. Premièrement, il faudra donc repérer les éléments discursifs de la typologie et expliciter le contexte dans lequel ils se présentent. Deuxièmement, un portrait de chaque texte sera brossé sous la forme de tableaux. Ceux-ci incluront l'ordre d'importance des discours qui a été observé dans chaque texte ainsi que des explications justifiant leur rang. En résumé, le but de ce chapitre est d'analyser les textes pour ensuite présenter les résultats selon une structure identique afin de les comparer entre eux. Ces comparaisons seront effectuées au troisième chapitre.

Avant de procéder, deux précisions s'imposent. D'une part, puisque l'analyse de chaque texte se fait de manière indépendante des autres, il pourrait y avoir certaines répétitions entre les analyses des différents textes. D'autre part, pour la même raison, aucun lien ne sera fait entre les textes à ce moment-ci de l'analyse, puisque l'objectif de ce chapitre n'est pas de les comparer, mais de dégager un portrait pour chacun d'eux.

2.1 Analyse du texte 1

Le premier texte s'intitule « *Obama's Speech in Lansing, Michigan* » et date du 4 août 2008. Malgré le fait qu'Obama l'ait présenté au Michigan, il ne traite pas d'enjeux locaux. En effet, même si Obama fait quelques références à l'industrie automobile de cet État, son texte a pour principal objectif de dévoiler le programme énergétique, « *New Energy for America* », qu'il a défendu durant la campagne électorale.

Étape 1 : Identification des discours

La première observation qui ressort de ce texte est le ton apocalyptique utilisé par Obama pour illustrer l'importance de ses propositions. Il emploie des expressions telles que : « *Our changing climate is placing our planet in peril* », « *the rising oceans and record drought and spreading famine that could engulf our planet* », « *Will we be the generation that leaves our children a planet in decline [...] ?* », « *leave our children a planet that grows more dangerous and unlivable by the day.* » En outre, il parle d'une obligation morale envers les générations futures et fait quelques références aux limites des réserves de pétrole. Obama mentionne aussi à plusieurs reprises que son plan ne sera pas facile à mettre en œuvre et que des sacrifices seront même nécessaires. Considérant tout cela, il ne fait aucun doute que le discours survivaliste occupe une place importante dans ce texte.

Cependant, malgré le fait qu'il contienne plusieurs références survivalistes, le texte s'apparente davantage à la modernisation écologique, et ce, pour quatre raisons. Premièrement, Obama justifie son programme énergétique par la menace que représente la dépendance des États-Unis au pétrole étranger. De son point de vue, se libérer de cette dépendance demeure un des plus gros défis auxquels devra faire face la présente génération. Contrairement à John McCain, son adversaire lors de l'élection présidentielle de 2008, Obama considère qu'il faut faire plus que seulement forer plus de pétrole pour y arriver. Effectivement, une transformation complète de l'économie du pays est nécessaire. De plus, il critique l'approche fragmentaire de ses opposants, ce qui sous-entend qu'il préfère une approche holistique. Il s'inscrit donc très bien dans le discours de la modernisation écologique qui suggère à la fois d'avoir une approche structurelle et de donner des bases plus « vertes » au capitalisme.

Deuxièmement, même s'il mentionne à quelques reprises que la transformation de l'économie pourrait être coûteuse et nécessiter des sacrifices, le reste de son texte indique le contraire. En effet, l'extrait suivant résume bien l'ensemble de ses propos :

Creating a new energy economy isn't just a challenge to meet, it's an opportunity to seize -- an opportunity that will create new businesses, new industries, and millions of new jobs. Jobs that pay well. Jobs that can't be outsourced. Good, union jobs.

Il répète par la suite à plusieurs reprises comment son plan créera des millions d'emplois en gardant sous silence la question des sacrifices. L'impression finale reste donc que la transformation de l'économie n'aura que du positif, ce qui est au diapason de la modernisation écologique qui présente la protection de l'environnement comme une opportunité économique. Ce constat vient conséquemment contredire l'idée survivaliste selon laquelle des sacrifices seront nécessaires.

Troisièmement, son plan repose en grande partie sur des investissements en recherche visant à améliorer les technologies existantes et à en développer de nouvelles. Par exemple, à propos du déploiement des énergies propres, il propose de continuer à offrir des crédits d'impôt pour la production d'énergie renouvelable. Il ajoute cependant :

In addition, we'll find safer ways to use nuclear power and store nuclear waste. And we'll invest in the technology that will allow us to use more coal, America's most abundant energy source, with the goal of creating five first-of-a-kind coal-fired demonstration plants with carbon capture and sequestration.

Obama semble donc suggérer que plusieurs percées technologiques sont nécessaires avant d'être en mesure de procéder à la transformation de l'économie. La modernisation écologique indique effectivement que des progrès scientifiques sont essentiels à la restructuration du capitalisme. Le discours survivaliste ne partage pas cet optimisme technologique puisque ses partisans jugent que l'innovation est une solution aux changements climatiques trop incertaine.

La dernière raison qui porte à croire que ce texte s'apparente à la modernisation écologique concerne la réduction des émissions de GES. Malgré le ton apocalyptique d'Obama à propos des changements climatiques, le président n'aborde la question des émissions de GES que brièvement, et ce, à la fin de son texte :

In just ten years, these steps will produce enough renewable energy to replace all the oil we import from the Middle East. Along with the cap-and-trade program I've proposed, we will reduce our dangerous carbon emissions 80% by 2050 and slow the warming of our planet. And we will create five million new jobs in the process.

Malgré le fait que la majorité de ses propositions, comme le développement des énergies renouvelables, réduirait les émissions de GES, Obama n'en fait pas la promotion en insistant sur ce point. Au contraire, son programme est avant tout décrit comme étant un plan économique qui aurait des avantages climatiques de second ordre. Nonobstant le fait qu'il parle davantage de la question de l'économie que celle de l'environnement, il reste qu'il présente les deux comme étant compatibles, c'est-à-dire exactement comme le prescrit la modernisation écologique.

Selon la même logique, la stratégie énergétique d'Obama est aussi justifiée par des arguments sécuritaires. En effet, même s'il aborde peu le sujet, la dépendance au pétrole est définie comme une menace à la sécurité des États-Unis. Son plan énergétique est donc un moyen d'éliminer cette menace. D'une certaine façon, il décrit la protection de l'environnement comme contribuant à la sécurité du pays, ce qu'indique également la modernisation écologique.

Étape 2 : Importance relative des discours

Tableau 2.1

Portrait du texte 1

Rang	Discours	Explications
1	Modernisation écologique	Ce discours occupe une place dominante dans ce texte. En effet, Obama parle longuement de la compatibilité entre l'économie, l'environnement et la sécurité. Il mentionne aussi l'importance du rôle du gouvernement et de la technologie pour protéger l'environnement. Enfin, il propose de transformer l'économie.
2	Discours survivaliste	Ce discours est seulement présent dans le ton apocalyptique d'Obama et dans l'idée que des sacrifices pourraient être nécessaires. Cette idée est cependant nuancée par l'optimisme dont il fait preuve dans le reste du texte.
3	Discours prométhéen	Aucunement présent.

2.2 Analyse du texte 2

Le texte, intitulé « *Remarks by the President on Jobs, Energy Independence, and Climate Change* », a été présenté par Obama le 26 janvier 2009, moins d'une semaine après son inauguration. L'objectif de ce texte, le premier de sa présidence à se pencher sur les enjeux énergétiques, est d'annoncer les premières décisions qu'il prendra dans ce domaine.

Étape 1 : Identification des discours

Obama commence par définir la dépendance énergétique du pays comme représentant une des plus grandes menaces auxquelles sont confrontés les États-Unis. Cette dépendance pose une menace autant en matière d'économie que de sécurité. Afin de s'y attaquer, Obama propose un plan qui s'inscrit parfaitement dans le discours de la modernisation écologique, et ce, pour cinq raisons.

Premièrement, il est intéressant de noter qu'Obama suggère de mettre en place une nouvelle économie énergétique aux États-Unis :

It will be the policy of my administration to reverse our dependence on foreign oil, while building a new energy economy that will create millions of jobs. We hold no illusion about the task that lies ahead. I cannot promise a quick fix; no single technology or set of regulations will get the job done.

Même s'il ne précise pas ce qu'il entend par l'expression « *new energy economy* », la citation indique malgré tout qu'il cherche à transformer l'économie, ce qui est une idée centrale de la modernisation écologique. De plus, en disant qu'il n'y a pas de solution unidimensionnelle et rapide au problème de la dépendance au pétrole du pays, il souligne aussi qu'il est nécessaire d'adopter une approche holistique et non une approche fragmentaire, un autre élément de ce discours.

Deuxièmement, il soutient que cette restructuration entraînera de nombreux bénéfices économiques :

It's time for America to lead, because this moment of peril must be turned into one of progress. If we take action, we can create new industries and revive old ones; we can open new factories and power new farms; we can lower costs and revive our economy.

En d'autres mots, il faut concevoir la menace que posent les changements climatiques et la

dépendance au pétrole comme une occasion unique de revitaliser l'économie du pays. Cette proposition reprend mot pour mot l'idée de la modernisation écologique selon laquelle les problèmes environnementaux représentent une opportunité économique.

Troisièmement, bien que le paragraphe précédent sous-entend déjà qu'il n'y a pas de contradiction entre la protection de l'environnement et la prospérité économique, la citation suivante à propos de l'industrie automobile démontre ce constat de manière encore plus convaincante :

As we move forward, we will fully take into account the unique challenges facing the American auto industry and the taxpayer dollars that now support it. And let me be clear: Our goal is not to further burden an already struggling industry. It is to help America's automakers prepare for the future. This commitment must extend beyond the short-term assistance for businesses and workers. We must help them thrive by building the cars of tomorrow, and galvanizing a dynamic and viable industry for decades to come.

Obama anticipe ici la critique qui consiste à affirmer qu'imposer des contraintes environnementales à l'industrie automobile nuirait à son développement. Au contraire, il décrit son programme comme un moyen de transformer cette industrie afin qu'elle soit viable à long terme. En d'autres mots, en forçant les constructeurs automobiles à concevoir des véhicules plus propres, Obama assure à cette industrie une croissance soutenue. Cette manière d'aborder la question de l'industrie de l'automobile sous-entend qu'Obama juge que l'économie et l'environnement sont conciliables.

Quatrièmement, Obama avance explicitement et à quelques reprises l'idée que la sécurité, l'économie et l'environnement sont compatibles. Par exemple, il dit : « *For the sake of our security, our economy and our planet, we must have the courage and commitment to change.* » Bien que ce genre de citations s'avère très général, celles-ci illustrent malgré tout un souci de présenter les trois enjeux comme n'étant pas en contradiction. Une telle rhétorique s'inscrit également dans le discours de la modernisation écologique.

La dernière observation relative à la modernisation écologique concerne la manière dont Obama aborde les changements climatiques. Il décrit surtout cet enjeu comme étant une menace à la sécurité du pays. Par exemple, il indique que les perturbations climatiques

pourraient entraîner des conflits violents. De plus, il présente la réduction des émissions de GES comme étant un moyen de s'attaquer à la dépendance énergétique des États-Unis, un enjeu posant aussi un risque sécuritaire. Ainsi, pour ces deux raisons, la lutte aux changements climatiques serait également compatible avec la sécurité du pays. Le président adopte conséquemment encore le discours de la modernisation écologique.

Étape 2 : Importance relative des discours

Tableau 2.2
Portrait du texte 2

Rang	Discours	Explications
1	Modernisation écologique	Ce discours occupe une place dominante dans ce texte. En effet, Obama parle longuement de la compatibilité entre l'économie, l'environnement et la sécurité. Il mentionne aussi l'importance du rôle du gouvernement et de la technologie pour protéger l'environnement. Enfin, il propose de transformer l'économie.
2	Discours survivaliste	Aucunement présent.
3	Discours prométhéen	Aucunement présent.

2.3 Analyse du texte 3

Ce texte, intitulé « *Remarks by the President Challenging Americans to Lead the Global Economy* », a été rendu public au *Massachusetts Institute of Technology* le 23 octobre 2009. Obama y présente un plan pour faire des États-Unis le leader international des énergies propres.

Étape 1 : Identification des discours

Le président commence par affirmer que le système énergétique des États-Unis mine la sécurité du pays et met la planète en danger. C'est pourquoi il faudrait opérer une transition énergétique, ce qu'il prétend avoir entamé avec son plan de relance :

That's why the Recovery Act that we passed back in January makes the largest investment in clean energy in history, not just to help end this recession, but to lay a new foundation for lasting prosperity.

Selon Obama, les investissements dans les énergies propres ont deux bénéfices. Ils permettent (1) de sortir de la récession en créant de l'emploi et (2) de mettre en place de nouvelles structures économiques nécessaires pour assurer la prospérité des États-Unis à long terme. Il prend même le soin d'anticiper une critique prométhéenne :

There are those who will suggest that moving toward clean energy will destroy our economy -- when it's the system we currently have that endangers our prosperity and prevents us from creating millions of new jobs.

Il mentionne aussi que son plan est essentiel pour éviter les pires conséquences des changements climatiques. En résumé, il défend deux caractéristiques principales de la modernisation écologique. D'une part, il prétend que la protection de l'environnement est bénéfique pour l'économie puisqu'elle créera des millions d'emplois et garantira une prospérité à long terme. D'autre part, la mise en place d'une nouvelle économie permettra de modifier le système énergétique des États-Unis et donc, de contrer la menace climatique.

Il affirme, en outre, que les pays à l'échelle de la planète sont engagés dans une compétition pour dominer l'industrie des énergies propres et que le vainqueur s'imposera dans l'économie mondiale : « *The nation that wins this competition will be the nation that leads the global economy.* » Cette proposition renforce l'idée selon laquelle le projet d'Obama vise à assurer une prospérité à long terme. À ce sujet, il importe de rappeler que pour la

modernisation écologique, une des manières de rentabiliser les investissements dans les énergies propres est d'exporter la technologie qui sera ainsi développée. C'est exactement ce vers quoi Obama veut guider les États-Unis.

Ce texte fait aussi plusieurs liens entre l'innovation et l'identité américaine. En plus de mentionner à quelques reprises plusieurs des grandes avancées technologiques américaines, il fait un lien avec le mythe de la frontière en affirmant que la nouvelle frontière est énergétique et que les États-Unis se doivent de la franchir. Il dit même que l'innovation est dans l'ADN de la « nation américaine ». Une telle croyance au progrès pourrait faire référence à la fois au discours prométhéen et à celui de la modernisation écologique. Le fait que cet argument soit employé pour souligner l'importance du gouvernement pour encourager cette innovation et non pour glorifier le libre marché indique cependant que les propos du président s'inscrivent dans le discours de la modernisation écologique.

De plus, il rappelle à deux reprises la nécessité d'adopter une législation climatique au Congrès sans mentionner explicitement que celle-ci viserait à réduire les émissions de GES du pays. Il résume de cette façon sa conception d'une telle législation : « *And all of this must culminate in the passage of comprehensive legislation that will finally make renewable energy the profitable kind of energy in America.* » Ainsi, Obama souhaite que les lois adoptées Congrès rendent les énergies renouvelables profitables. Ici, l'idée de profit semble plus importante à ses yeux que l'objectif de limiter les émissions de GES. Même s'il semble mettre de côté l'environnement, sa proposition cadre malgré tout avec la modernisation écologique. En effet, en suggérant une politique qui rendrait les énergies renouvelables profitables, il indique que le gouvernement a un rôle à jouer dans la protection de l'environnement. À cela, il faut ajouter que plus loin dans le texte, Obama sous-entend que cette législation devrait être le fruit d'une coopération entre la communauté des affaires et les groupes environnementaux. Ce genre de collaboration est cher au discours de la modernisation écologique.

Enfin, ce texte véhicule aussi quelques idées liées au discours survivaliste. En effet, il contient quelques arguments moraux justifiant le programme d'Obama. Par exemple, le

président indique : « *Countries on every corner of this Earth now recognize that energy supplies are growing scarcer, energy demands are growing larger, and rising energy use imperils the planet we will leave to future generation.* » De plus, il précise que la population est prête à faire des choix difficiles, ce qui rappelle la notion de sacrifice de ce discours. Ces références sont toutefois mineures dans l'ensemble du texte.

Étape 2 : Importance relative des discours

Tableau 2.3

Portrait du texte 3

Rang	Discours	Explications
1	Modernisation écologique	Ce discours occupe une place dominante dans ce texte. En effet, Obama parle longuement de la compatibilité entre l'économie, l'environnement et la sécurité. Il mentionne aussi l'importance du rôle du gouvernement et de la technologie pour protéger l'environnement. Enfin, il propose de transformer l'économie.
2	Discours survivaliste	Quelques idées de ce discours se trouvent dans ce texte, mais leur importance est limitée.
3	Discours prométhéen	Aucunement présent.

2.4 Analyse du texte 4

Ce texte est le premier « discours sur l'état de l'Union »²² d'Obama, prononcé le 27 janvier 2010. Il traite de plusieurs enjeux et accorde une place importante aux questions énergétiques et climatiques.

Étape 1 : Identification des discours

Obama commence par énoncer ses objectifs à court terme pour redresser l'économie des États-Unis. Il suggère particulièrement de mettre en place l'infrastructure du futur, comme des trains à grande vitesse, et d'encourager les Américains à améliorer l'efficacité énergétique

²² Cette expression est entre guillemets pour éviter toute confusion avec le concept de discours dans le reste du mémoire. En effet, puisque « discours sur l'état de l'Union » est un titre, il n'a pas été modifié, le rendant ainsi non conforme à la convention à propos de l'utilisation des mots « texte » et « discours » qui a été présentée dans le cadre théorique.

de leurs maisons. Selon lui, le tout devrait stimuler l'économie et créer des emplois. Puisque ces mesures diminueraient aussi la consommation d'énergie des États-Unis, le président sous-entend conséquemment que la protection de l'environnement et la prospérité économique ne sont pas en opposition.

Il précise cependant que ces propositions ne sont pas suffisantes pour assurer une croissance économique soutenue. Par conséquent, il veut mettre en place de nouvelles structures économiques fondées sur les énergies propres. Il affirme que les autres pays comme la Chine, l'Allemagne et l'Inde n'attendent pas pour aller dans cette direction. Afin de faire de même, il suggère de s'appuyer entre autres sur l'innovation dans le secteur de l'énergie, secteur qui offre selon lui les meilleures opportunités économiques. L'adoption d'une législation climatique permettrait justement de stimuler la recherche et de s'assurer de créer des emplois dans le secteur des énergies propres en rendant celles-ci rentables. En d'autres mots, la restructuration de l'économie américaine passe par l'innovation dans le domaine de l'énergie. Ainsi, Obama aborde plusieurs thèmes chers à la modernisation écologique.

Il prend aussi le soin d'anticiper les critiques prométhéennes et y répond de la façon suivante :

I know there have been questions about whether we can afford such changes in a tough economy. I know that there are those who disagree with the overwhelming scientific evidence on climate change. But here's the thing -- even if you doubt the evidence, providing incentives for energy-efficiency and clean energy are the right thing to do for our future — because the nation that leads the clean energy economy will be the nation that leads the global economy. And America must be that nation.

Dès lors, il dit que malgré les coûts engendrés par le renforcement de l'économie « verte », il est avantageux à long terme de compter sur les énergies propres afin de continuer à dominer l'économie mondiale, et ce, même si le débat scientifique à propos des changements climatiques fait encore rage. Ici, Obama reconnaît donc que son programme pourrait être coûteux à court terme, mais il le justifie néanmoins à l'aide d'un argument entièrement utilitariste : des investissements dans les énergies propres assureront le maintien de la domination économique des États-Unis. Cette vision s'apparente conséquemment à la

modernisation écologique.

En terminant, il faut spécifier qu'Obama n'aborde pas du tout la question environnementale d'un point de vue moral. Le texte ne contient effectivement aucune référence au discours survivaliste. Au contraire, il suggère d'ouvrir certaines zones côtières au forage de pétrole et de gaz naturel. Sa formulation s'avère cependant intéressante : « *It means making tough decisions about opening new offshore areas for oil and gas development.* » Il sous-entend donc qu'il est conscient que cette proposition est contraire à la logique du reste de son programme énergétique. Considérant cela, bien que cette idée s'apparente à celles du discours prométhéen, le lien est faible puisqu'un partisan de ce discours ne se serait pas excusé de vouloir augmenter la production de combustibles fossiles. Il demeure cependant que cette formulation laisse une impression d'ambiguïté quant à la priorisation de l'économie aux dépens de l'environnement.

Étape 2 : Importance relative des discours

Tableau 2.4

Portrait du texte 4

Rang	Discours	Explications
1	Modernisation écologique	Ce discours occupe une place dominante dans ce texte. En effet, Obama parle longuement de la compatibilité entre l'économie, l'environnement et la sécurité. Il mentionne aussi l'importance du rôle du gouvernement et de la technologie pour protéger l'environnement. Enfin, il propose de transformer l'économie.
2	Discours prométhéen	Ce texte contient au moins une référence au discours prométhéen (proposition de forer du pétrole en mer).
3	Discours survivaliste	Aucunement présent.

2.5 Analyse du texte 5

Ce texte, intitulé « *Remarks by the President to the Nation on the BP Oil Spill* », a été présenté le 15 juin 2010 en réponse à l'explosion sur la plate-forme de forage *Deepwater Horizon* et à la marée noire qui s'en est suivie. Après avoir exposé son plan à court terme pour faire face à la catastrophe, Obama précise qu'un programme à long terme demeure nécessaire pour développer les énergies propres et ainsi se libérer de la dépendance énergétique des États-Unis.

Étape 1 : Identification des discours

Obama commence son texte en soulignant les leçons qu'il faut tirer de la catastrophe dans le golfe du Mexique :

So one of the lessons we've learned from this spill is that we need better regulations, better safety standards, and better enforcement when it comes to offshore drilling. But a larger lesson is that no matter how much we improve our regulation of the industry, drilling for oil these days entails greater risk. After all, oil is a finite resource.

En plus de noter que le pétrole est une ressource limitée, il sous-entend que l'exploitation de celle-ci implique forcément de grands risques. Le seul moyen d'éviter cette menace demeure de cesser de dépendre du pétrole. Ainsi, il décrit cette catastrophe comme un rappel tragique de la nécessité de se libérer de cette emprise pour ne pas laisser un sombre héritage aux prochaines générations. En défendant en des termes moraux son programme et en parlant des limites environnementales de la planète, Obama s'inscrit clairement dans le discours survivaliste.

Ses propos changent toutefois lorsqu'il présente concrètement ses solutions. En investissant dans les énergies propres, il serait, selon lui, à la fois possible de diminuer la dépendance des États-Unis et de stimuler l'économie. Il illustre le lien entre ces bénéfices en soulignant que pendant que les États-Unis envoient près d'un milliard de dollars par année aux pays producteurs de pétrole, d'autres comme la Chine investissent dans ces énergies et créent ainsi des emplois. Plus loin, il insiste sur l'argument économique en ajoutant : « *As we recover from this recession, the transition to clean energy has the potential to grow our economy and create millions of jobs.* » Essentiellement, il répète l'idée selon laquelle les

investissements dans les énergies propres sont profitables et contribuent à la sécurité. Obama sous-entend ainsi que la protection de l'environnement, la prospérité économique et la sécurité peuvent être compatibles, comme le prescrit la modernisation écologique.

La transition énergétique qu'il propose de faire pourrait néanmoins avoir des coûts. Le fait de considérer ceux-ci pourrait faire penser au discours survivaliste, mais la manière dont il en parle indique cependant le contraire :

Now, there are costs associated with this transition. And there are some who believe that we can't afford those costs right now. I say we can't afford not to change how we produce and use energy - because the long-term costs to our economy, our national security, and our environment are far greater.

À première vue, les coûts dont il parle pourraient être assimilés à des sacrifices de la part des Américains. Obama n'indique cependant pas que ceux-ci sont uniquement nécessaires pour des raisons environnementales, ce que ferait le discours survivaliste. Au contraire, il affirme que des sacrifices économiques à court terme permettront de prévenir des conséquences néfastes pour l'économie et la sécurité à long terme. En d'autres mots, il faut payer un peu maintenant pour éviter de payer davantage plus tard. Un tel raisonnement utilitariste ainsi que l'apparente compatibilité entre l'environnement, l'économie et la sécurité inscrivent ce passage dans la logique de la modernisation écologique.

Enfin, le gouvernement semble avoir un rôle important à jouer dans son programme de transition énergétique. En affirmant qu'il est nécessaire d'accélérer cette transition, il sous-entend effectivement que celle-ci ne se produira pas d'elle-même. L'État doit donc s'impliquer dans le dossier en mettant en place des mesures incitatives pour stimuler l'innovation. Ici, Obama tient donc des propos semblables à ceux de la modernisation écologique. L'exemple de la législation climatique adoptée à la Chambre des représentants en 2009 illustre bien ce point. En effet, Obama défend ce projet de loi en précisant qu'il pourrait contribuer à rendre les énergies renouvelables rentables. Le rôle du gouvernement est donc ici essentiel. Dans le même ordre d'idée, Obama interpelle les gens qui s'opposent à toute forme de réglementation pour le forage en mer en soulignant que cette industrie ne peut s'autoréglementer. Il s'agit d'une critique du discours prométhéen qui prétend que le gouvernement est inutile. En résumé, Obama réitère de plusieurs façons que le gouvernement

à un rôle important à jouer dans la protection de l'environnement.

Étape 2 : Importance relative des discours

Tableau 2.5

Portrait du texte 5

Rang	Discours	Explications
1	Modernisation écologique	Ce discours occupe une place dominante dans ce texte. En effet, Obama parle longuement de la compatibilité entre l'économie, l'environnement et la sécurité. Il mentionne aussi l'importance du rôle du gouvernement et de la technologie pour protéger l'environnement. Enfin, il propose d'élaborer les politiques environnementales en collaboration avec tous les acteurs concernés.
2	Discours survivaliste	Ce discours occupe une place secondaire dans le texte. Obama parle d'abord de la limite des ressources de pétrole. Ensuite, il adopte un ton quelque peu apocalyptique et justifie ses politiques à l'aide d'un argument moral. Il aborde enfin la question du sacrifice, mais d'une manière très nuancée.
3	Discours prométhéen	Aucunement présent.

2.6 Analyse du texte 6

Ce texte est le deuxième « discours sur l'état de l'Union » d'Obama. Il a été présenté le 25 janvier 2011 et traite principalement de création d'emplois selon trois axes : l'innovation, l'éducation et l'infrastructure. La partie sur l'innovation sera analysée puisqu'elle aborde les enjeux énergiques.

Étape 1 : Identification des discours

Le président commence par souligner que l'innovation demeure le premier moyen d'assurer un avenir prospère aux États-Unis. Il reconnaît aussi que la libre entreprise est le meilleur système pour stimuler cette innovation. Il précise cependant que puisqu'il n'est pas toujours profitable pour les entrepreneurs d'investir dans la recherche fondamentale, le gouvernement a constamment dû appuyer financièrement les scientifiques. Il rappelle que, dans le passé, l'aide de l'État a par exemple contribué au développement de l'internet et du GPS. Il propose donc d'investir davantage dans la recherche afin d'encourager ce genre

d'innovation et ainsi assurer une croissance économique. Par conséquent, bien qu'il ne parle pas d'environnement, la logique qu'il présente est similaire à celle de la modernisation écologique.

Obama précise par la suite sa pensée en listant les domaines dans lesquels il veut stimuler l'innovation et en indiquant clairement que le plus important reste celui des énergies propres. Par exemple, il décrit un investissement dans ces énergies de la façon suivante : « *an investment that will strengthen our security, protect our planet, and create countless new jobs for our people.* » De plus, afin d'illustrer le rôle essentiel du gouvernement, il raconte l'histoire d'une entreprise familiale qui a su se réinventer en producteur de panneaux solaires à l'aide d'un prêt de l'État. Il s'approprie donc deux arguments de la modernisation écologique : celui de la compatibilité entre l'environnement, l'économie et la sécurité ainsi que l'importance du gouvernement.

Les propos d'Obama deviennent cependant un peu plus flous lorsqu'il suggère de générer 80 % de l'électricité du pays à l'aide d'énergies propres d'ici 2035. Il soutient effectivement que pour atteindre cet objectif, les États-Unis auront besoin de toutes les formes d'énergie : éolienne, solaire, nucléaire, « charbon propre » et gaz naturel. Il n'omet que le pétrole. Il sous-entend donc que le nucléaire, le « charbon propre » et le gaz naturel sont des énergies propres. Les bénéfices environnementaux d'une telle politique s'avèrent sans aucun doute incertains. En effet, le charbon²³ et le gaz naturel demeurent des combustibles fossiles contribuant aux changements climatiques. Ce constat est d'autant plus intéressant qu'Obama ne parle pas du tout de cet enjeu environnemental. Il justifie au contraire son programme en faisant référence aux bienfaits économiques potentiels de ces types d'énergie. Le président semble donc accorder davantage d'importance à l'économie qu'à l'environnement. Par conséquent, ses propos s'inscrivent ici dans la logique du discours prométhéen.

²³ Le « charbon propre » pourrait en théorie permettre d'utiliser cette source d'énergie sans émettre de pollution. Cette technologie demeure cependant trop coûteuse et l'extraction du charbon reste une activité très dommageable pour l'environnement.

Dernièrement, comme mentionné plus haut, Obama ne se penche pas du tout sur la question des changements climatiques. Il affirme à un moment que les investissements en énergies propres contribuent à sauver la planète, mais cet énoncé a peu de poids si Obama ne prend pas le temps d'expliquer le lien entre les deux. De manière plus générale, il ne parle pas du tout d'environnement. Un tel silence peut être interprété comme un moyen de marginaliser les enjeux environnementaux. En omettant de reconnaître l'importance de ces enjeux, Obama s'approche donc à nouveau du discours prométhéen.

Étape 2 : Importance relative des discours

Tableau 2.6
Portrait du texte 6

Rang	Discours	Explications
1	Modernisation écologique	Ce discours occupe une place importante dans ce texte. En effet, Obama parle un peu de la compatibilité entre l'économie, l'environnement et la sécurité. Il mentionne aussi l'importance du rôle du gouvernement et de la technologie pour protéger l'environnement.
2	Discours prométhéen	En restant muet sur les questions environnementales et climatiques tout en proposant de développer toutes les formes d'énergie, même les combustibles fossiles, ce texte s'inscrit aussi dans le discours prométhéen.
3	Discours survivaliste	Aucunement présent.

2.7 Analyse du texte 7

Ce texte, intitulé « *Remarks by the President on America's Energy Security* », a été présenté en public le 30 mars 2011. Il porte entièrement sur les questions énergétiques. Obama y parle principalement des moyens pour libérer les États-Unis de leur dépendance au pétrole étranger.

Étape 1 : Identification des discours

En décrivant le problème de la dépendance au pétrole, Obama semble opter pour le discours survivaliste. Ce discours est particulièrement présent dans le passage suivant :

The United States of America cannot afford to bet our long-term prosperity, our long-term security on a resource that will eventually run out, and even before it runs out will get more and more expensive to extract from the ground. We can't afford it when the costs to our economy, our country, and our planet are so high. Not when your generation needs us to get this right. It's time to do what we can to secure our energy future.

En adoptant un ton alarmiste et en insistant principalement sur la limite des ressources, le président utilise effectivement des idées survivalistes. La notion de sacrifice, aussi importante pour ce discours, s'avère également présente dans le texte puisqu'Obama mentionne à quelques reprises qu'il n'existe pas de solutions faciles à ce problème et qu'il faut penser à long terme.

Celles proposées par Obama ne sont cependant pas en phase avec le ton alarmiste de la précédente citation. En effet, son programme s'apparente davantage à la modernisation écologique qu'au discours survivaliste. Plusieurs idées de ce discours ressortent effectivement du texte. Par exemple, il insiste à plusieurs reprises sur le rôle central du gouvernement. De surcroît, Obama affirme que l'ingéniosité américaine demeure la plus grande opportunité du pays pour diminuer sa dépendance au pétrole et il présente les investissements dans les énergies propres comme étant bénéfiques pour l'économie et la sécurité.

En analysant l'ensemble du texte, il reste cependant que la modernisation écologique y occupe malgré tout une place secondaire. En effet, le discours prométhéen s'avère plus important, et ce, pour quatre raisons. Premièrement, le président propose de favoriser le

forage de pétrole en mer, d'exploiter les réserves de gaz naturel américaines, de développer l'énergie nucléaire et d'investir dans la technologie du « charbon propre ». De plus, Obama semble nier les problèmes environnementaux qui accompagnent ces sources d'énergie en prétendant qu'il est possible de les rendre plus sécuritaires et de les développer de manière responsable. Une telle pensée magique est caractéristique du discours prométhéen. Il faut aussi dire que son plan n'a pas l'ambition de la modernisation écologique. En effet, il ne suggère pas de restructurer l'économie, mais tout simplement d'améliorer les technologies existantes.

Deuxièmement, Obama se penche peu sur la question des énergies propres dans ce texte. Il se contente de répéter l'argument de la modernisation écologique selon lequel le développement de ces énergies permettra de créer des emplois et de stimuler l'économie, mais il reste vague et propose peu de réformes concrètes. De plus, le président semble volontairement entretenir une confusion en qualifiant le gaz naturel d'énergie propre. Comme mentionné précédemment, il est difficile de caractériser ce gaz d'énergie « propre » puisque celui-ci demeure un combustible fossile. En niant ainsi les conséquences environnementales de l'utilisation de cette source d'énergie, Obama s'inscrit donc ici aussi dans le discours prométhéen.

Troisièmement, il accorde une très grande importance au pétrole. Comme il a été mentionné plus haut, il propose d'augmenter le forage en mer. Il justifie cette décision en affirmant que cette croissance de la production américaine de pétrole créera de nombreux emplois et garantira la sécurité énergétique des États-Unis. Encore ici, Obama s'inscrit donc dans la logique prométhéenne puisqu'il parle à peine des impacts environnementaux du pétrole et met plutôt l'accent sur ses avantages économiques et sécuritaires. Il faut cependant dire qu'il suggère aussi de diminuer à long terme la consommation de pétrole par différents moyens, comme l'efficacité énergétique et les énergies renouvelables. Bien que de telles ambitions puissent être associées à la modernisation écologique, il reste que le président propose à court terme de forer davantage de pétrole pour des raisons économiques et au détriment de l'environnement. Ainsi, le programme du président est plus proche de la logique du discours prométhéen.

Enfin, la manière dont il traite des changements climatiques cadre aussi avec ce discours. Par exemple, il dit :

Even for those of you who are interested in seeing a reduction in our dependence on fossil fuel – and I know how passionate young people are about issues like climate change – the fact of the matter is, is that for quite some time, America is going to be still dependent on oil in making its economy work.

Même s'il n'est pas faux de dire que les États-Unis ne peuvent cesser de consommer du pétrole rapidement, cette citation révèle deux choses. D'une part, Obama minimise l'importance des changements climatiques comme s'ils ne constituaient qu'un enjeu mineur qui ne concerne que les jeunes, ce qui est en opposition avec le sentiment d'urgence qu'il transmettait au début de son texte. D'autre part, il indique clairement que la santé de l'économie américaine est à ses yeux plus importante. Cette façon de marginaliser la question des changements climatiques et de prioriser l'économie s'inscrit dans le discours prométhéen.

Étape 2 : Importance relative des discours

Tableau 2.7

Portrait du texte 7

Rang	Discours	Explications
1	Discours prométhéen	Le discours prométhéen occupe la première place puisqu'Obama défend l'utilisation des combustibles fossiles, minimise la question des changements climatiques et priorise la prospérité économique au détriment de la protection de l'environnement.
2	Modernisation écologique	Ce discours occupe une place relativement importante dans ce texte. Obama parle notamment de la compatibilité entre économie, environnement et sécurité. Il affirme également que le gouvernement et la technologie doivent jouer un rôle dans la protection de l'environnement.
3	Discours survivaliste	Ce discours occupe une place secondaire. Obama parle des limites de pétrole et affirme qu'il n'y a pas de solution simple au problème de la dépendance énergétique des États-Unis.

2.8 Analyse du texte 8

Ce texte est le dernier « discours sur l'état de l'Union » du premier mandat d'Obama et a été prononcé publiquement le 24 janvier 2012. L'énergie y occupe une place relativement importante.

Étape 1 : Identification des discours

Obama entame la partie du texte sur l'énergie en se vantant d'avoir favorisé l'exploitation du pétrole et du gaz naturel durant son mandat. Il est particulièrement fier de dire que ses politiques auraient permis d'augmenter la production américaine de pétrole et ainsi, de diminuer les importations. Il décrit ces réalisations de manière strictement positive en prenant soin d'éviter de se pencher sur les impacts environnementaux causés par l'utilisation des combustibles fossiles. Une telle façon de présenter les enjeux énergétiques n'accorde aucune importance à l'environnement et suit donc la logique du discours prométhéen.

Il précise cependant que puisque les États-Unis ne possèdent que deux pour cent des réserves mondiales de pétrole, il est nécessaire de développer toutes les sources d'énergie américaines. Il utilise l'expression « *all-of-the-above* », empruntée aux républicains, pour indiquer qu'il désire profiter de toutes les formes d'énergie possibles, incluant les combustibles fossiles. En d'autres mots, il cherche à contrer la critique à son égard voulant que sa politique ne vise qu'à favoriser les énergies renouvelables. Il qualifie de la façon suivante son plan : « *A strategy that's cleaner, cheaper, and full of new jobs.* » Même s'il prétend que cette stratégie est « propre », il donne cependant l'impression que son programme accorde plus d'importance à l'origine des sources d'énergie qu'à leurs impacts sur l'environnement. En effet, cette priorisation est le seul moyen de comprendre comment il peut présenter toutes ces formes d'énergie comme étant sur le même pied d'égalité. Ainsi, bien que son raisonnement parte de l'idée selon laquelle les réserves de pétrole sont limitées, une idée survivaliste, sa solution semble plutôt prométhéenne puisque l'environnement n'y occupe aucune importance.

En outre, la position d'Obama par rapport au gaz naturel s'avère quelque peu ambiguë. En effet, après avoir pris le temps de spécifier que cette ressource doit être développée sans

mettre en péril la santé et la sécurité des Américains, il présente le gaz naturel comme une énergie propre. De plus, l'idée selon laquelle l'extraction du gaz créera des emplois constitue pour Obama une preuve qu'il n'est pas nécessaire de choisir entre l'environnement et l'économie. Il répète donc textuellement le principal argument de la modernisation écologique. Bien que l'idée voulant que le gaz naturel constitue une énergie propre soit loin de faire l'unanimité, il est malgré tout intéressant de constater qu'Obama utilise cet argument. Le simple fait qu'il y ait recours pourrait sous-entendre qu'il accorde une certaine importance à l'environnement. Ou au contraire, il s'agit peut-être d'une stratégie ayant pour but de dissimuler les impacts environnementaux du gaz naturel. Peu importe ses raisons, il reste qu'il suggère d'exploiter cette ressource néfaste pour l'environnement. Ses propos demeurent donc plus proches du discours prométhéen.

Il s'avère aussi intéressant de noter qu'Obama se penche sur l'enjeu climatique à une seule reprise pour mentionner qu'un blocage persiste sur cette question au Congrès. Certes, les mesures qu'il avance auraient des impacts positifs sur le climat, mais le fait d'en traiter si peu sous-entend qu'il ne considère pas cet enjeu comme prioritaire. Cette constatation se confirme quand Obama fait sienne la stratégie « *all-of-the-above* » qui accorde une place centrale aux combustibles fossiles. Encore une fois, minimiser l'importance des problèmes environnementaux tout en présentant des politiques néfastes pour l'environnement indique que les propos d'Obama s'inscrivent dans la logique du discours prométhéen.

Enfin, après avoir avoué qu'il ne sera pas possible de garantir l'adoption d'une législation climatique au Congrès, il affirme que les élus du Capitole devraient au moins accepter de voter des normes de production d'énergies propres, et ce, afin de mettre en place un marché pour l'innovation. En suggérant d'instaurer un tel marché, il sous-entend que l'État a un rôle à jouer dans la lutte aux changements climatiques, ce qui est conforme à la modernisation écologique. Il utilise un autre argument de ce discours lorsqu'il mentionne que les énergies propres permettent de créer des emplois. Il faut cependant dire que sa définition d'énergie propre reste floue puisqu'il place le gaz naturel dans cette catégorie. La modernisation écologique pourrait ainsi être moins présente que ses propos ne le laissent croire.

Étape 2 : Importance relative des discours

Tableau 2.8

Portrait du texte 8

Rang	Discours	Explications
1	Discours prométhéen	Le discours prométhéen occupe la première place puisqu'Obama défend l'utilisation des combustibles fossiles en se vantant de l'augmentation de l'exploitation de ce type de ressource durant sa présidence. De plus, Obama promeut sa stratégie « <i>all-of-the-above</i> », qui consiste à dire que les États-Unis devraient exploiter toutes les ressources énergétiques. Enfin, il minimise l'importance des enjeux environnementaux.
2	Modernisation écologique	Ce discours occupe une place importante dans ce texte. Obama parle par exemple d'une compatibilité entre l'économie et l'environnement et affirme que le gouvernement et la technologie peuvent contribuer à la protection de l'environnement.
3	Discours survivaliste	Aucunement présent.

2.9 Analyse du texte 9

Ce texte, intitulé « *Remarks by the President on Energy* », est une allocution datant du 15 mars 2012. Ici, Obama cherche principalement à expliquer l'augmentation du prix de l'essence.

Étape 1 : Identification des discours

Obama commence son texte en présentant le problème du coût élevé de l'essence comme étant d'ordre international. Il explique que les deux principales causes de l'augmentation et de la fluctuation du prix du pétrole sont l'instabilité au Moyen-Orient et la croissance de la demande des pays comme la Chine et l'Inde. À ses yeux, le meilleur moyen de se protéger de ces variations demeure de miser sur l'indépendance énergétique. Bien qu'il ne soit pas possible d'associer cette solution à un discours en particulier, il s'avère malgré tout intéressant de noter qu'Obama ne mentionne pas que la diminution des réserves internationales de pétrole pourrait aussi avoir un impact déterminant sur le coût de l'essence. Le fait d'omettre l'argument des limites environnementales signifie que le président s'éloigne du discours survivaliste.

Avant de faire connaître ses positions sur la question, Obama prend le temps de critiquer celles de ses adversaires républicains en indiquant qu'il ne sera pas suffisant de forer plus de pétrole américain pour régler ce problème, et ce, pour deux raisons. D'une part, Obama précise que les États-Unis extraient déjà abondamment de ce pétrole. Il est d'ailleurs fier de mentionner que la production de cette ressource a augmenté durant son mandat tout en soulignant que cette croissance a été faite en protégeant la santé et la sécurité des Américains. D'autre part, il rappelle que les États-Unis n'ont pas assez de ressources pétrolières pour subvenir à leurs besoins. Afin de tendre vers l'indépendance énergétique, il faut conséquemment des sources d'énergie alternatives. Obama semble donc croire qu'il s'avère seulement nécessaire de trouver d'autres solutions au problème du prix de l'essence parce que les États-Unis n'ont pas suffisamment de pétrole. En somme, Obama est fier d'exploiter du pétrole et il en forerait davantage si c'était possible. Une telle attitude envers ce combustible fossile ne peut que cadrer avec le discours prométhéen.

Le même constat s'impose quand les solutions mises de l'avant par le président sont analysées. En effet, il propose une stratégie « *all-of-the-above* », c'est-à-dire le développement de toutes les sources d'énergie afin de libérer le pays de sa dépendance au pétrole. Plus précisément, il affirme : « *We need an energy strategy for the future – an all-of-the-above strategy for the 21st century that develops every source of American-made energy.* » Ainsi, toutes les formes d'énergie sont admises, tant et aussi longtemps qu'elles proviennent des États-Unis. Cette stratégie inclut les énergies éoliennes et solaires, l'efficacité énergétique et les biocarburants, mais aussi les combustibles fossiles. Par rapport à ces derniers, Obama prend même soin de spécifier qu'il demeure nécessaire de développer au maximum le pétrole et le gaz, ce qui confirme la conclusion du précédent paragraphe. Puisque le principal critère de sélection des sources d'énergie est leur origine américaine, l'environnement n'a donc aucune place dans cette stratégie. Par conséquent, le programme d'Obama s'inscrit parfaitement dans le discours prométhéen.

Il faut quand même noter qu'ailleurs dans son texte, Obama mentionne plusieurs idées liées à la modernisation écologique. Par exemple, il indique que les énergies propres ont déjà créé de nombreux emplois depuis le début de son mandat. Le président aborde aussi à quelques reprises les enjeux de la recherche et de l'innovation en précisant l'importance des investissements publics. Il est également intéressant de constater qu'il suggère de couper les subventions aux pétrolières pour financer ces investissements. Il essaie, en outre, de présenter sa proposition comme étant une solution d'avenir, par opposition à celles de ses adversaires qui seraient passéistes. Toutes ses idées relèvent effectivement de la modernisation écologique, mais leur importance dans le texte reste limitée, car il y traite surtout de sa stratégie « *all-of-the-above* ».

Enfin, Obama n'aborde pas une seule fois les enjeux environnementaux ou climatiques dans ce texte. Il ne parle qu'une fois de la nécessité de protéger les ressources naturelles. Cette absence d'insistance sur les enjeux environnementaux peut être interprétée comme étant une forme de négation de leur existence, comme l'indique le discours prométhéen. Une telle interprétation se confirme par le fait qu'il accorde une grande place aux combustibles fossiles dans le texte sans mentionner leurs conséquences environnementales. Ainsi, même

s'il contient quelques références à la modernisation écologique, ce texte relève davantage du discours prométhéen.

Étape 2 : Importance relative des discours

Tableau 2.9

Portrait du texte 9

Rang	Discours	Explications
1	Discours prométhéen	Le discours prométhéen occupe la première place, car Obama y défend l'utilisation des combustibles fossiles en se vantant de l'augmentation de l'exploitation de cette ressource sous son administration. De plus, il propose une stratégie « <i>all-of-the-above</i> », favorable au pétrole et au gaz. Il y a aussi une forme de négation des problèmes environnementaux puisqu'il n'en parle pas et qu'il ne nuance pas ses propos sur les combustibles fossiles.
2	Modernisation écologique	Ce discours occupe une place importante dans ce texte. Obama parle entre autres d'une compatibilité entre l'économie et l'environnement. Il précise aussi que le gouvernement et la technologie ont un rôle central à jouer dans la protection de l'environnement.
3	Discours survivaliste	Aucunement présent.

2.10 Analyse du texte 10

Ce texte, intitulé « *Remarks by the President at the Democratic National Convention* », est l'allocution prononcée par Obama le 7 septembre 2012 lors de la Convention démocrate. Obama y présente ce qu'il a fait durant son mandat et ce qu'il compte faire dans son second, s'il est réélu. Il y aborde brièvement les enjeux énergétiques.

Étape 1 : Identification des discours

Dans la partie de son texte sur l'énergie, Obama commence par se vanter d'avoir augmenté l'efficacité énergétique des véhicules et d'avoir doublé la production d'énergie renouvelable du pays. Selon lui, cette dernière réalisation a permis la création de milliers d'emplois. Il ajoute ensuite qu'il a diminué la dépendance énergétique des États-Unis, mais sans préciser lesquelles de ses politiques sont responsables de cet accomplissement. Jusqu'à ce moment, son discours semble donc relever de la modernisation écologique.

Le ton d'Obama change toutefois quand il commence à se pencher sur les combustibles fossiles. Il est fier de dire qu'il a favorisé l'exploitation du pétrole et du gaz naturel et qu'il compte poursuivre sur cette voie. Il se défend cependant d'être comme Mitt Romney, son adversaire dans la course à la présidence, puisqu'il ne laissera pas les compagnies pétrolières écrire la politique énergétique du pays, mettre en danger les côtes ou continuer de bénéficier de subventions de milliards de dollars. Malgré cette critique envers les pétrolières, il prend le temps de mentionner que l'exploitation du pétrole américain permettrait de réduire davantage les importations de cette ressource et qu'il serait possible de créer des centaines de milliers d'emplois dans le secteur du gaz naturel. En d'autres mots, même s'il parlait plus haut des énergies renouvelables, il met surtout son plan en valeur en soulignant les avantages de l'exploitation du pétrole et du gaz. En présentant de cette façon tous les aspects positifs des combustibles fossiles, Obama tient donc des propos qui s'inscrivent dans la logique du discours prométhéen.

Le texte s'éloigne cependant du discours prométhéen quand Obama aborde la question des changements climatiques :

And yes, my plan will continue to reduce the carbon pollution that is heating our

planet – because climate change is not a hoax. More droughts and floods and wildfires are not a joke. They are a threat to our children's future.

Cette citation relève directement du discours survivaliste. Puisque ce discours et le discours prométhéen sont en entière contradiction, la logique d'Obama peut être difficile à suivre. En effet, comment peut-il favoriser l'exploitation du pétrole et du gaz naturel tout en se préoccupant des émissions de CO₂ qui causent les changements climatiques? Certes, il est possible de dire que l'exploitation du gaz naturel permet de remplacer des centrales au charbon par des centrales au gaz, ce qui diminue les émissions de gaz carbonique. Il reste cependant que dans l'ensemble, ses propositions ne sont pas à la hauteur des dangers qu'il identifie. En effet, les solutions survivalistes sont basées sur l'idée que des changements radicaux sont nécessaires. Ainsi, même si la précédente citation rappelle les préoccupations environnementales d'Obama, le fait que ses ambitions soient relativement timides empêche de conclure que le discours survivaliste a une grande importance dans ce discours.

Étape 2 : Importance relative des discours

Tableau 2.10

Portrait du texte 10

Rang	Discours	Explications
1	Discours prométhéen	Le discours prométhéen occupe la première place puisqu'Obama défend considérablement l'utilisation des combustibles fossiles en se vantant de l'augmentation de l'exploitation de cette ressource sous son administration. De plus, il propose une stratégie « <i>all-of-the-above</i> », favorable au pétrole et au gaz. Enfin, Obama promet aussi des emplois dans le secteur du gaz naturel.
2	Modernisation écologique	Obama aborde brièvement la compatibilité entre l'environnement et l'économie et il sous-entend que le gouvernement a un rôle à jouer dans la protection de l'environnement.
3	Discours survivaliste	Obama adopte un ton apocalyptique et présente les changements climatiques comme un enjeu moral, mais les solutions proposées ne suivent pas la logique du discours.

CHAPITRE III

ÉVOLUTION DU DISCOURS ENVIRONNEMENTAL DE BARACK OBAMA

L'objectif de ce chapitre est de mettre en évidence la façon dont le discours environnemental d'Obama a évolué au cours de son mandat. Plus précisément, il s'agit d'effectuer la troisième étape de la méthodologie qui se décline en deux temps. Premièrement, il faudra considérer les portraits du précédent chapitre afin de déterminer comment l'ordre d'importance des discours a changé d'un texte à l'autre. Deuxièmement, les éléments discursifs inclus dans chaque portrait seront comparés dans le but d'évaluer comment leur présence a varié dans les textes. Enfin, l'évolution observée sera expliquée en identifiant les différents facteurs qui auraient pu exercer une influence sur le président.

3.1 Évolution de l'ordre d'importance des discours

Le premier objectif consiste à déterminer comment l'importance de chacun des discours de la typologie a évolué d'un texte à l'autre. Afin de faciliter cette comparaison, il semble pertinent de regrouper l'ordre d'importance des discours qui a été déterminé pour chaque texte dans un tableau. Le tableau 3.1 illustre cette compilation.

Tableau 3.1

Ordre d'importance des discours de la typologie pour chaque texte

	Date	1er discours	2e discours	3e discours
Texte 1	2 août 2008	ME	S	—
Texte 2	16 janvier 2009	ME	—	—
Texte 3	23 octobre 2009	ME	S	—
Texte 4	27 janvier 2010	ME	P	—
Texte 5	15 juin 2010	ME	S	—
Texte 6	25 janvier 2011	ME	P	—
Texte 7	30 mars 2011	P	ME	S
Texte 8	24 janvier 2012	P	ME	—
Texte 9	15 mars 2012	P	ME	—
Texte 10	6 septembre 2012	P	ME	S

Légende : « S » = discours survivaliste, « P » = discours prométhéen, « ME » = modernisation écologique et « — » = aucun discours

Suite à l'analyse de ce tableau, quatre observations s'imposent. Premièrement, le discours de la modernisation écologique s'avère être le plus important jusqu'au texte 6. Deuxièmement, à partir du texte 7, le discours prométhéen s'impose en première place, et ce, jusqu'à la fin. Troisièmement, à ce moment, même si la modernisation écologique a perdu sa position dominante, elle demeure au deuxième rang. Finalement, le discours survivaliste fait son apparition à quelques reprises dans les textes, mais il reste toujours le discours le moins présent.

Ces résultats préliminaires tendent à confirmer la thèse de ce mémoire. En effet, ceux-ci indiquent que la modernisation écologique a seulement occupé la première place dans les propos d'Obama durant la première moitié de son mandat. À partir du texte 7, en 2011, c'est

plutôt le discours prométhéen qui s'est imposé. Ce constat est intéressant, mais la comparaison des ordres d'importance ne permet pas de comprendre précisément ce qui a changé dans les propos d'Obama. À cette fin, il s'avère essentiel de se pencher sur l'évolution des éléments discursifs d'un texte à l'autre. La prochaine section effectuera cet exercice.

3.2 Évolution des éléments discursifs

Le deuxième objectif consiste à évaluer de quelle manière la présence des éléments discursifs a changé dans les propos d'Obama. À cette fin, il faut à nouveau se référer aux portraits présentés au deuxième chapitre. En effet, ceux-ci dressent une liste des principaux éléments discursifs identifiés dans chaque texte. En comparant ces listes, il est possible de repérer d'une part, les éléments discursifs qui se retrouvent dans tous les textes et d'autre part, les éléments dont la présence a varié d'un texte à l'autre. Les éléments discursifs constants et changeants sont énoncés dans les sections suivantes.

3.2.1 Les éléments discursifs constants

Bénéfices économiques

D'une manière régulière, Obama défendait ses politiques en soulignant que celles-ci auraient des bénéfices économiques. Plus particulièrement, il affirmait que le secteur des énergies renouvelables offrait d'innombrables opportunités économiques et que le fait d'investir dans celles-ci créerait plusieurs emplois. Certes, au début, il parlait de millions d'emplois et à la fin, de milliers, mais il reste que de manière générale, il établissait constamment un lien entre les énergies renouvelables et la prospérité économique. Cet aspect de la modernisation écologique était donc toujours présent dans les textes.

Bénéfices sécuritaires

Il défendait aussi continuellement l'idée selon laquelle ses politiques offriraient des avantages pour la sécurité des États-Unis. Son principal argument était qu'en produisant plus d'énergie, le pays serait moins dépendant du pétrole étranger. Le sens de cet argument aurait cependant quelque peu changé au cours de son mandat. Au début, il était surtout question de produire davantage d'énergies renouvelables aux États-Unis, alors qu'à la fin, Obama incluait également la production de combustibles fossiles. Même si ce glissement de sens indiquait

une certaine évolution dans le discours du président, il reste qu'il soutenait toujours au minimum que les énergies renouvelables comportent des bénéfices sécuritaires, à l'instar de la modernisation écologique.

Rôle du gouvernement

Le rôle essentiel du gouvernement pour mener à bien ses politiques environnementales était un autre thème de la modernisation écologique récurrent dans les textes. Obama y mentionnait toujours que l'État devait encourager et financer l'innovation dans le domaine de l'énergie ou mettre en place des réglementations pour stimuler son développement. Le degré d'importance qu'il accordait au gouvernement aurait cependant quelque peu changé au cours de son mandat. Par exemple, dans les premiers textes, Obama voulait contribuer à transformer certaines industries comme celle de l'automobile, alors qu'à la fin le gouvernement devait se contenter de financer la recherche scientifique. Malgré cette différence, le président accordait toujours une place centrale à l'État.

3.2.2 Les éléments discursifs changeants

Degré d'ambition des propositions d'Obama

L'analyse des portraits du précédent chapitre indique que le degré d'ambition des propositions d'Obama a considérablement changé au cours de son mandat. Il suffit d'opposer les premiers textes aux derniers pour le constater.

Dans les quatre premiers textes, Obama voulait mettre en place une « nouvelle économie énergétique ». Une telle suggestion consistait à transformer profondément l'économie des États-Unis afin de la rendre plus « verte ». De plus, dans les textes 1 et 2, il utilisait un ton apocalyptique pour démontrer que ses politiques étaient essentielles. Obama cherchait donc à restructurer l'économie du pays, ce qui cadrerait bien dans le discours de la modernisation écologique. Qui plus est, il présentait son programme comme étant nécessaire pour des raisons morales, ce qui correspondait aux arguments du discours survivaliste.

À l'opposé, dans les derniers textes, il ne proposait plus une transformation drastique de l'économie. En effet, il se contentait d'avancer certaines mesures énergétiques ponctuelles,

comme le financement des énergies propres. Dans le texte 8, il semblait même se résigner à mettre de l'avant des projets peu ambitieux et à dénoncer l'inertie du Congrès :

We can also spur innovation with new incentives. The differences in this chamber may be too deep right now to pass a comprehensive plan to fight climate change. But there's no reason why Congress shouldn't at least set a clean energy standard that creates a market for innovation.

Il faut aussi dire que les quelques politiques qu'il présentait ne formaient plus une stratégie cohérente. Par exemple, dans le texte 8, il suggérait d'augmenter la production de pétrole et de gaz naturel tout en sous-entendant qu'il aimerait lutter contre les changements climatiques. Autrement dit, il avançait une série de mesures n'étant pas nécessairement compatibles entre elles. En plus d'être moins ambitieuses, ses propositions pouvaient par conséquent s'avérer contre-productives.

En résumé, Obama arriva au pouvoir avec l'intention de restructurer l'économie afin de la rendre plus verte. Avec le temps, il sembla se résigner à présenter quelques politiques environnementales ayant moins de portée. Le degré d'ambition de son programme diminua donc clairement. Obama s'éloigna de la modernisation écologique qui insiste sur la nécessité de transformer l'économie.

Attitude d'Obama envers les combustibles fossiles

Le changement le plus marquant dans les propos d'Obama a cependant été son attitude de plus en plus complaisante envers les combustibles fossiles. Encore une fois, une opposition entre les premiers textes et les derniers permet de le constater.

Il faut tout d'abord noter que jusqu'au texte 7, Obama mentionnait toujours que le pétrole demeure une ressource limitée sur laquelle il serait risqué de compter à long terme. Qui plus est, dans les textes 1, 3 et 5, le président prit même soin de présenter les combustibles fossiles comme un mal nécessaire durant la transition vers les énergies propres. Cette façon de décrire les enjeux énergétiques sous-entendait qu'Obama envisageait de libérer totalement les États-Unis des combustibles fossiles, car ceux-ci seraient fondamentalement néfastes. Il le dit d'ailleurs explicitement dans le texte 5 :

This is not some distant vision for America. The transition away from fossil fuels

is going to take some time, but over the last year and a half, we've already taken unprecedented action to jumpstart the clean energy industry.

Obama indiquait donc implicitement qu'il espérait voir un jour les États-Unis cesser d'utiliser les combustibles fossiles. En résumé, le président dépeignait négativement ce type d'énergie à plusieurs reprises.

À partir des textes 7 et 8, l'attitude d'Obama commença à changer. C'est par exemple dans ces textes qu'il suggéra pour la première fois explicitement d'augmenter la production de gaz naturel et de pétrole, et ce, sans spécifier que ces mesures seraient temporaires en attendant la transition énergétique. En effet, il se contenta de dire dans le texte 7 que cette proposition ne constituait pas une solution à long terme. De plus, dans le texte 8, il affirma seulement que cette croissance ne serait pas suffisante pour libérer les États-Unis de leur dépendance. Enfin, dans les textes 9 et 10, il ne prit même plus le soin de nuancer. L'indice le plus révélateur de l'évolution du discours d'Obama fut toutefois la décision du président de recourir à l'expression républicaine « *all-of-the-above* » pour décrire sa politique énergétique. Celle-ci indiquait qu'Obama voulait utiliser toutes les sources d'énergie, et ce, sans en privilégier une par rapport aux autres. L'exploitation des combustibles fossiles serait donc redevenue acceptable aux yeux d'Obama, qui ne ressentait même plus le besoin de justifier sa décision de développer ces ressources.

Il faut aussi dire que dans les textes 9 et 10, Obama se contenta de mentionner que les États-Unis épuiserait un jour leurs réserves de pétrole tout en gardant sous silence le fait que cette ressource est aussi limitée au niveau planétaire. Cette façon de présenter l'exploitation des combustibles fossiles sous-entendait une idée très importante : Obama voulait développer des sources d'énergie alternatives pour la seule et unique raison que les États-Unis manqueraient un jour de combustibles fossiles. De plus, dans les textes 8, 9 et 10, en parlant du bilan de son mandat, il se vanta d'avoir encouragé l'augmentation de la production d'hydrocarbures. Dans ces textes, il proposa également de continuer dans cette voie afin de créer des emplois. Ainsi, les combustibles n'étaient plus un mal nécessaire, mais bien une source de prospérité économique. Par conséquent, cette nouvelle vision correspondait sans aucun doute au discours prométhéen.

3.2.3 Conclusion

Au terme de cette analyse des éléments discursifs présents dans les textes, deux observations s'imposent. D'une part, certaines idées centrales de la modernisation écologique se retrouvent dans tous les textes étudiés dans ce mémoire. Par exemple, Obama a systématiquement mis l'accent sur les bénéfices économiques et sécuritaires de ses politiques environnementales. Qui plus est, il a constamment insisté sur l'importance du gouvernement fédéral pour mener à bien son programme. D'autre part, deux changements illustrent cependant qu'Obama a graduellement délaissé la modernisation écologique au profit du discours prométhéen. En effet, ses propositions sont devenues de moins en moins ambitieuses avec le temps et il s'est montré progressivement plus favorable aux combustibles fossiles.

En d'autres mots, il est une seconde fois possible d'affirmer que la thèse de cette recherche est corroborée. Le discours environnemental d'Obama s'apparentait considérablement à celui de la modernisation écologique au début de son mandat, mais entre 2010 et 2011, ce discours a commencé à être de moins en moins présent dans ses allocutions publiques. En outre, l'analyse confirme la précédente constatation soulignant que le discours prométhéen a pris le dessus.

Il s'avère désormais essentiel de chercher à expliquer les deux changements identifiés ci-dessus. Cet exercice permettra de comprendre pourquoi le discours d'Obama a évolué au cours de son mandat.

3.3 Explication des changements

Pour expliquer les deux changements observés dans les propos d'Obama, il importe d'identifier clairement les moments où ils ont eu lieu. L'analyse de la section précédente met effectivement en évidence deux points de rupture : (1) après le texte 4, le président a cessé de présenter un plan ambitieux de restructuration de l'économie des États-Unis et (2) à partir du texte 7, il a commencé à proposer explicitement et sans nuance d'augmenter la production de combustibles fossiles. Ces transitions sont illustrées dans le tableau 3.2.

Tableau 3.2

Présence des éléments discursifs dans les textes

Élément discursif	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Plan de restructuration de l'économie	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	-	-	-	-	-
2. Favorable aux combustibles fossiles	-	-	-	-	-	-	✓	✓	✓	✓

Légende : « ✓ » indique que l'élément discursif était présent dans le texte.

Ainsi, après le texte 4, le discours environnemental d'Obama n'incluait plus l'un des éléments discursifs centraux de la modernisation écologique, soit l'idée selon laquelle il fallait restructurer l'économie. Qui plus est, un élément fondamental du discours prométhéen s'est taillé une place dans la pensée d'Obama à partir du texte 7²⁴. C'est effectivement à partir de ce texte qu'Obama a clairement commencé à appuyer l'exploitation des combustibles fossiles, démontrant que l'économie était soudainement devenue plus importante à ses yeux que l'environnement.

L'objectif de cette section sera donc de mettre en évidence ce qui aurait pu inciter le président à changer son discours environnemental. Les facteurs d'influence identifiés dans le cadre théorique, c'est-à-dire (1) le Congrès, (2) les groupes d'intérêt comme l'industrie des combustibles fossiles, (3) l'état de l'économie, (4) les facteurs physiques comme les catastrophes climatiques et (5) l'entourage du président, guideront cette analyse. Les deux changements énoncés précédemment, soit (1) la baisse des ambitions climatiques d'Obama ainsi que (2) l'adoption par le président d'une attitude favorable envers les combustibles fossiles, seront expliqués séparément dans les pages suivantes.

3.3.1 Échec de l'*American Power Act* de 2010

Lors de sa campagne électorale de 2008, Obama ne laissait planer aucun doute quant à son intention de se démarquer de son prédécesseur, George W. Bush, en engageant

²⁴ Le texte 7 est un peu plus nuancé que le tableau le laisse croire puisque dans celui-ci, même si Obama est favorable aux combustibles fossiles, il reconnaît malgré tout que le pétrole est une ressource limitée. Il a été ainsi classé, car c'est le premier texte où Obama propose explicitement d'encourager l'exploitation du pétrole et du gaz naturel.

pleinement les États-Unis dans les efforts internationaux de lutte aux changements climatiques.

Comme l'indique le texte 1, le principal moyen par lequel Obama voulait diminuer les émissions de GES du pays consistait à mettre en œuvre un système d'échange de quotas d'émission. En effet, durant la campagne électorale de 2008, Obama soutenait que ce système permettrait de réduire les émissions de GES des États-Unis de 80 % d'ici 2050. À titre informatif, en français, l'expression « bourse du carbone » est aussi employée, alors que le terme anglais est « *cap-and-trade* »²⁵. Il importe aussi de noter que la bourse du carbone est une politique s'inscrivant, selon Hajer (1995, 27), dans la logique de la modernisation écologique²⁶.

De plus, la bourse du carbone devait également être le principal mécanisme par lequel l'économie du pays devait se transformer. En effet, un tel système aurait, en langage économique, internalisé dans l'économie l'externalité²⁷ que constituent les émissions de GES. En forçant ainsi les pollueurs à payer pour leurs émissions, ce système aurait incité les entreprises à adopter des technologies plus propres. L'économie des États-Unis aurait donc pu, en théorie, se transformer de manière considérable.

Afin de mettre en place une bourse du carbone, Obama devait compter sur la

²⁵ Ce système consiste en l'imposition d'une limite annuelle aux émissions globales de GES du pays (« *Cap* »), pour ensuite distribuer des quotas d'émissions aux principaux émetteurs à hauteur de cette limite. Il permet enfin aux émetteurs de les échanger entre eux (« *Trade* ») afin que chacun ait des quotas à hauteur de ses émissions de GES à la fin de l'année (Stavins 2008, 298).

²⁶ Dryzek (2005, 128-129) considère plutôt que la bourse du carbone s'inscrit dans un discours qui n'a pas été présenté dans le premier chapitre, celui du rationalisme de marché. Il indique cependant que la modernisation écologique propose plusieurs des politiques développées par ce discours (Dryzek 2005, 178-179).

²⁷ Selon le Rapport Stern, les émissions de GES représentent une externalité puisque ceux qui émettent ces gaz et qui ainsi causent les changements climatiques ne paient pas le plein coût social que leurs actions imposent au reste du monde. En internalisant ces coûts, c'est-à-dire en forçant les émetteurs à payer le plein coût de leurs gestes, les individus et les entreprises seront donc encouragés à cesser de consommer des produits et des services qui émettent abondamment de GES (Stern et al. 2006, xviii).

coopération du Congrès. En effet, il était nécessaire de voter une législation climatique pour procéder. Puisqu'il n'a pas été en mesure d'obtenir l'appui de cette institution, sa promesse n'a pas été respectée. Dans le but de comprendre comment cet échec aurait pu influencer le président, un retour en arrière s'impose.

Un départ prometteur

Peu de temps après l'arrivée d'Obama à la Maison-Blanche, des démocrates à la Chambre des représentants tentèrent de garantir l'adoption d'une législation climatique correspondant à la vision d'Obama. Grâce à une confortable majorité dans cette chambre et malgré l'opposition de nombreux membres de ce parti, il s'avéra possible, le 26 juin 2009, d'adopter l'*American Clean Energy and Security Act*, aussi appelé *Waxman-Markey Bill*. Il est important de noter qu'à l'époque, ce projet de loi constituait, et demeure à ce jour, la seule législation climatique à avoir été adoptée dans l'une ou l'autre des deux Chambres du Congrès. Même si un tel exploit paraissait encourageant, van Asselt et Brewer (2010, 44) rappelaient que pour que le processus législatif continue, le Sénat, qui demeurerait très divisé sur les questions climatiques, devait également adopter un projet de loi.

Les débats au Sénat sur cet enjeu débutèrent en septembre 2009, à l'initiative de John Kerry, sénateur du Massachusetts et candidat malheureux à la présidence en 2004, et Barbara Boxer, sénatrice de la Californie et présidente du comité sur l'environnement et les travaux publics du Sénat. Ils proposèrent un projet de loi rédigé par Boxer, mais fortement inspiré de celui adopté à la Chambre des représentants. L'objectif était alors d'en garantir l'adoption avant la conférence sur le climat de Copenhague en décembre 2009. Une telle réalisation aurait permis à Obama de s'engager au niveau international en sachant que le Congrès l'appuierait (Samuelsohn 2009a).

Après des mois d'efforts, Kerry n'arrivait toujours pas à trouver un sénateur républicain qui accepterait de parrainer le projet de loi avec lui. Après avoir entendu dire que Lindsey Graham, sénateur de la Caroline du Sud, pourrait approuver une législation climatique moins drastique, Kerry commença à travailler avec lui. Le 11 octobre 2009, ils publièrent ensemble un texte dans le *New York Times* annonçant leur partenariat (Kerry et Graham 2009). Kerry

abandonna donc Boxer et son projet de loi dans le but d'en proposer un nouveau qui accorderait davantage de place au forage en mer et à l'énergie nucléaire. Graham exigea aussi que Joseph Lieberman, qui était à l'époque sénateur indépendant du Connecticut, se joigne au duo afin d'éviter que Kerry ne le tire trop à gauche (Lizza 2010).

Alors qu'il s'avéra impossible de recueillir suffisamment de votes au Sénat pour le projet Kerry-Graham-Lieberman avant la conférence de Copenhague²⁸, la petite équipe s'affaira à créer une importante coalition incluant plusieurs groupes environnementaux, mais aussi plusieurs industries. Selon Lizza (2010), les sénateurs étaient prêts à offrir plusieurs concessions aux différentes organisations opposées à leur législation climatique, comme l'industrie pétrolière, afin d'obtenir leur appui ou du moins, leur neutralité. Leurs efforts semblaient porter des fruits puisqu'ils avaient l'intention de présenter leur projet de loi, l'*American Power Act*, en grande pompe lors d'une conférence de presse en compagnie de leaders du milieu des affaires, de figures religieuses et de militaires le 26 avril 2010 (Samuelsohn 2010).

Un mois d'avril tragique

Leur initiative commença toutefois à battre de l'aile à la fin mars, alors qu'Obama proposa d'ouvrir de vastes zones côtières du pays au forage en mer. Puisque les républicains et l'industrie pétrolière exigeaient exactement cette mesure, cette décision du président fût interprétée par le *New York Times* comme étant un indice qu'Obama essayait d'aider les trois sénateurs à obtenir des votes pour leur projet de loi (Broder 2010b). Pour sa part, Lizza (2010) arrivait à une conclusion fort différente. Selon ses sources, il n'y aurait eu aucune communication entre ceux-ci et l'administration Obama et donc, il n'y avait aucune coordination ou stratégie. En fait, les sénateurs étaient furieux et se sentaient trahis, car de leur point de vue, le président suggérait d'offrir immédiatement une concession aux républicains, soit l'ouverture de zones au forage en mer, alors que Kerry, Graham et

²⁸ Il est cependant intéressant de noter que durant la conférence, Obama s'était engagé à réduire les émissions de GES du pays du même pourcentage que la proposition des sénateurs (Samuelsohn 2009b; Samuelsohn 2009c).

Lieberman voulaient utiliser cette proposition comme monnaie d'échange pour convaincre les républicains d'appuyer leur projet de loi. Ils venaient donc de perdre un de leurs principaux arguments.

Ensuite, la marée noire qui aurait suivi l'explosion sur la plate-forme *Deepwater Horizon* dans le golfe du Mexique le 20 avril 2010 aurait pu favoriser l'adoption de la législation climatique. En effet, il aurait été logique de conclure d'une telle catastrophe que l'exploitation du pétrole serait une entreprise dangereuse et qu'il faudrait développer les énergies renouvelables afin de réduire la consommation de combustibles fossiles. La mise en place d'une bourse du carbone engendrerait exactement cette transition. Suite à la tragédie, Kerry présenta un argumentaire similaire dans le journal *Roll Call* (2010). Or, selon Lizza (2010), le désastre aurait finalement porté ombrage aux efforts de Kerry et Lindsay. Le journaliste indique qu'il devenait désormais inconcevable de défendre une législation climatique permettant plus de forage en mer, car les quotidiens débordaient d'images du drame dans le golfe. La stratégie de Kerry, Graham et Lieberman tombait donc à l'eau, en raison de la catastrophe de *Deepwater Horizon*, voire, celle-ci se serait retournée contre eux.

Deux jours avant l'annonce publique du projet, alors que la marée noire continuait à miner les chances de l'adopter, la personne responsable de la rédaction des dispositions de la législation portant sur le forage en mer, le sénateur Graham, retira son appui. Il expliqua sa décision par l'intention d'Harry Reid, le chef de la majorité au Sénat, de prioriser une loi sur l'immigration à une sur l'énergie. Selon Graham, cette prise de position démontrait que l'administration Obama et les démocrates au Sénat n'étaient pas, à ce moment, entièrement dévoués à la question climatique (Broder 2010c; Eilperin 2010). Certes, cette situation était frustrante pour Graham, mais était-elle suffisante pour justifier son abandon du projet après de nombreux mois de travail avec Kerry et Lieberman? Potentiellement, puisque depuis le début de sa collaboration avec les deux sénateurs, Graham subissait une énorme pression de ses électeurs en Caroline du Sud et du parti républicain en général (Barr 2009). De plus, il commença à être critiqué par *Fox News* le 15 avril 2010, qui l'accusait d'appuyer une augmentation de la taxe fédérale sur l'essence (Fox News 2012). Peu importe les raisons qui poussèrent Graham à retourner sa chemise, il demeurait que sans la présence du seul

républicain à avoir ouvertement défendu le projet de loi, il devenait inconcevable de le faire adopter. Selon Lizza (2010), la défection de Graham aurait sonné le glas de cette législation.

Impact de cet échec sur le discours environnemental d'Obama

Depuis cet échec, plusieurs analystes de la politique environnementale des États-Unis tentent d'identifier les facteurs qui permettent d'expliquer ce revers pour le parti démocrate. Alors que tous s'entendent pour dire que l'intense polarisation partisane, dont l'avènement du *Tea Party* en est le principal symptôme, a eu une influence considérable (Loewentheil 2013, 22-23; Skocpol 2013, 87-88; Roberts 2013; Romm 2013), ils sont en désaccord sur deux autres points. En effet, le rôle de la récession de 2008 ainsi que l'impact de l'implication limitée du président ne font pas consensus. Loewentheil (2013, 40-47) soutient que la récession a contribué à rendre les politiques environnementales plus difficiles à promouvoir auprès de la population et que le président aurait pu aider davantage les démocrates au Congrès, comme il l'a fait pour la réforme de la santé. Pour sa part, Skocpol (2013, 11-20) affirme que la récession n'a eu qu'une conséquence marginale sur la campagne climatique au Congrès et qu'Obama n'aurait pas réellement pu en faire plus.

Comme l'indique la liste des facteurs pouvant influencer le président exposée au premier chapitre (le Congrès, les groupes d'intérêt, l'état de l'économie, les facteurs physiques et l'entourage du président), l'avènement du *Tea Party* (groupe d'intérêt) et la récession de 2008 (facteur économique) peuvent certainement avoir eu un impact sur le discours d'Obama. Ils ne permettent cependant pas d'expliquer pourquoi l'ambition des propositions du président a subitement diminué au cours de l'été 2010. En effet, Obama a défendu une politique climatique d'envergure au début de la récession en 2008 et a continué à le faire, malgré l'émergence du *Tea Party* en 2009.

Par rapport à l'engagement d'Obama, l'article de Lizza (2010) indique que, même au sein de l'entourage du président, il y avait un désaccord quant au rôle que devait jouer la Maison-Blanche dans les débats au Congrès. Le journaliste affirme que Carol Browner, assistante auprès du président pour les questions énergétiques et climatiques, était passionnée

par l'enjeu climatique, mais que celle-ci bénéficiait de peu d'influence. Paul Schiliro, directeur des affaires législatives, voulait que la Maison-Blanche « contrôle » le Congrès. David Axelrod, conseiller politique du président, était très influent et n'était pas convaincu de l'importance à accorder à la législation climatique. Enfin, Rahm Emanuel, le chef du bureau présidentiel, ne voulait pas que la Maison-Blanche s'implique tant que le trio de sénateurs n'avait pas l'appui de plus de républicains. Selon Lizza (2010) et Loewentheil (2013, 46-46), les conseillers favorisant un plus grand engagement de la Maison-Blanche auraient convaincu Obama de s'impliquer pleinement pour faire adopter la réforme de la santé, mais ils n'auraient pas réussi à le faire pour la législation climatique. Skocpol (2013, 16) résume ainsi l'attitude prédominante autour d'Obama :

The White House team would not let the President fully engage until and unless sufficient House or Senate majorities were almost in place, because it was thought to be politically dangerous – and not likely to help – to get Obama directly involved in the messy, shifting horse-trading over taxes, regulations, and side-payments that necessarily played out over many months while Congressional committees tried to assemble the majorities necessary for comprehensive health reform or cap and trade.

En d'autres mots, les conseillers du président ne voulaient pas que la Maison-Blanche aide le trio de sénateurs à obtenir les majorités nécessaires au Congrès. La politique climatique défendue par Obama se trouvait donc à la merci de cette institution.

Au final, c'est donc le Congrès qui a eu une influence décisive sur Obama, et ce, de deux façons. D'une part, après les événements d'avril 2010, et particulièrement avec la défection du sénateur Graham, il semblait clair que Kerry n'arriverait pas à faire adopter l'*American Power Act*. Obama ne pouvait donc pas compter sur la collaboration du Congrès dont il avait besoin pour mener à bien ses politiques climatiques. Ce constat de la part du président l'aurait conséquemment incité à diminuer l'ambition de son programme. Ce changement est apparent pour la première fois dans le texte 5 datant de juin 2010. À partir de ce moment, il aurait cessé de proposer une restructuration de l'économie.

D'autre part, les résultats des élections de mi-mandat de 2010 auraient confirmé l'idée selon laquelle Obama ne pourrait obtenir la coopération du Congrès jusqu'à la fin de son premier mandat. En effet, avec une reprise de contrôle de la Chambre des représentants par le

parti républicain, il était devenu pratiquement impossible de faire adopter une législation climatique. Devant cette nouvelle configuration du Congrès, le président n'aurait eu d'autres choix que de continuer à diminuer l'ambition de son programme climatique. Comme il a été noté dans la comparaison des discours, il aurait effectivement commencé à suggérer des mesures énergétiques modestes.

En bref, l'absence de coopération du Congrès aurait forcé Obama à revoir à la baisse ses ambitions climatiques. Il aurait ainsi ajusté son discours environnemental afin de proposer une politique qui aurait plus de chances d'obtenir l'appui de cette institution. Ce constat démontre l'influence décisive que la législature fédérale exerce sur la présidence.

3.3.2 Un retour en force des combustibles fossiles

Contrairement à la baisse des ambitions climatiques du président, l'adoption par le président d'une attitude favorable envers les combustibles fossiles ne s'explique pas par les mêmes événements, mais plutôt par trois autres circonstances. Il s'agit de (1) l'augmentation du prix de l'essence, (2) l'échec de la rhétorique des emplois verts et (3) l'obligation d'Obama de défendre son bilan énergétique.

Augmentation du prix de l'essence

L'année 2011 ne commença pas uniquement mal pour Obama avec l'arrivée de la nouvelle majorité républicaine à la Chambre des représentants. En effet, après une chute spectaculaire du prix de l'essence sous les 2 \$ le gallon à l'inauguration de son mandat, chute causée par la récession de 2008, le coût de cette ressource monta en flèche au début de l'année 2011 pour se stabiliser entre 3 et 4 \$. La figure 3.1 illustre l'évolution du prix de l'essence depuis 2000.

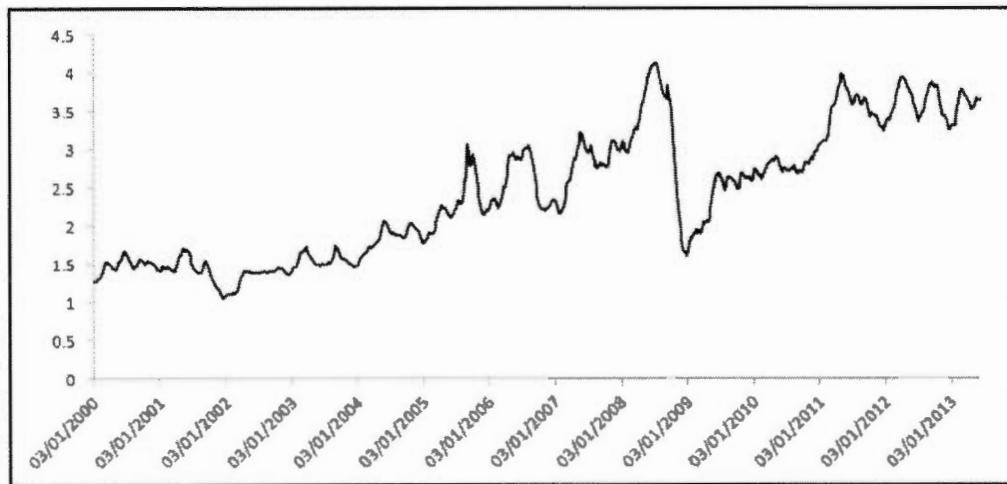


Figure 3.1 Évolution du prix de l'essence moyen en USD par gallon de 2000 à 2013 (EIA 2013)

Afin de comprendre l'impact politique qu'une telle hausse peut avoir aux États-Unis, il faut revenir en arrière. Selon Daniel Yergin (1991, 211), depuis les années 1920 aux États-Unis, les élus étaient considérés comme responsables des augmentations du prix de l'essence. De plus, l'économiste Richard H. Thaler (2012) précisa en 2012 que plusieurs Américains pensaient effectivement que le président aurait un certain contrôle sur le prix du carburant, et ce, même si pratiquement tous les économistes soutenaient le contraire. Cette fausse perception des Américains fut confirmée dans plusieurs sondages comme l'indiqua *The Christian Science Monitor*. Par exemple, un sondage de *CBS-New York Times* souligna en mars 2012 que 54 % des Américains croyaient qu'Obama pourrait faire davantage pour réduire le prix de l'essence (Grant 2012).

Dans le but de profiter de cette fausse perception, et par la même occasion, la renforcer, plusieurs élus proposèrent d'augmenter la production américaine de pétrole afin de diminuer le coût de l'essence, ce qui serait futile selon Thaler (2012). Le *New York Times* affirmait justement en mai 2011 que la Chambre des représentants, sous contrôle républicain, adoptait à répétition des projets de loi qui encourageaient l'exploitation du pétrole (Broder 2011b). Même si Obama tenta, dans le texte 7, de ridiculiser cette mesure en rappelant le slogan de Sarah Palin de 2008, « *Drill, baby, drill* », les législations républicaines constituaient une

stratégie pour critiquer la politique énergétique du président et mettre en évidence le fait qu'il avait, depuis son arrivée au pouvoir, défendu un programme qui n'était pas entièrement favorable au pétrole. D'ailleurs, les républicains ne cachaient pas leur désir d'utiliser la hausse des prix de l'essence pour mettre Obama dans l'embarras (Shear 2012).

Confronté à la rancœur de la population et aux attaques républicaines, Obama n'aurait donc pas eu d'autres choix que de présenter une politique énergétique plus favorable au pétrole. Plus précisément, afin de donner l'impression qu'il cherchait réellement à régler le problème du prix de l'essence, il aurait décidé, à partir du texte 7, de jouer le jeu des républicains en proposant explicitement d'encourager la production de pétrole, et ce, sans nuancer comme il le faisait dans les textes précédents²⁹. Selon cette logique, l'augmentation du prix du pétrole aurait contribué à changer son discours à propos des combustibles fossiles.

Échec de la rhétorique des emplois verts

Durant la campagne présidentielle de 2008, Obama n'hésitait pas à indiquer que la mise en place d'une nouvelle économie « verte » et la lutte aux changements climatiques créeraient des millions d'emplois verts. Dans le texte 1, il parla effectivement de 5 millions. Comme il fut mentionné dans le premier chapitre, il présentait sa politique climatique comme un moyen de redresser et de développer l'économie du pays (Román et Carson 2009, 58-59; Carson et Román 2010, 400-401). En effet, Emanuel disait déjà explicitement au *Wall Street Journal* en 2008 qu'il ne fallait pas perdre les opportunités offertes par une crise. Selon lui, une crise permettrait de faire des choses qui n'étaient pas possibles avant, et ce, dans plusieurs domaines, dont l'énergie (Seib 2008). À l'instar de la modernisation écologique, cette manière de considérer cette question sous-entend que la protection de l'environnement peut

²⁹ Il faut cependant rappeler que, comme il a été mentionné plus haut, Obama proposait déjà le 31 mars 2010 d'augmenter de manière considérable le forage en mer (Broder 2010b). Deux éléments demeurent cependant à préciser. D'une part, il faut rappeler que dans le texte 4, Obama proposait déjà d'augmenter le forage en mer, mais qu'il présentait l'idée comme une décision difficile, alors qu'il ne nuance plus à partir du texte 7. D'autre part, le fait de proposer d'augmenter le forage en mer est devenu plus critiquable d'un point de vue environnemental après la marée noire dans le golfe du Mexique qui a commencé quelques semaines après l'annonce d'Obama.

être compatible avec le développement économique.

Or, selon Loewentheil (2013, 40), il semblait que ce discours n'ait pas convaincu la population. Le chercheur indiquait en effet que l'intensité de la récession aurait au contraire engendré une peur à propos de la santé de l'économie à long terme, faisant de l'économie l'enjeu prioritaire aux yeux des Américains. Il devenait ainsi plus délicat de proposer des initiatives environnementales même en disant qu'elles seraient avantageuses pour l'économie. Les difficultés économiques auraient donc rendu les gens davantage réceptifs à l'idée prométhéenne selon laquelle la protection de l'environnement ne pouvait que nuire à l'économie. En d'autres mots, la question des bénéfices économiques de la protection de l'environnement étant devenue plus difficile à promouvoir, il aurait été préférable de l'éviter. Loewentheil (2013, 41) indiquait que cette controverse expliquerait pourquoi la Maison-Blanche se serait éloignée de sa propre rhétorique des emplois verts.

Le rejet de cet argument est perceptible dans la manière dont Obama justifia certaines de ses décisions. En effet, en 2011, le président tint des propos incompatibles avec cette rhétorique. Par exemple, le 2 septembre 2011, il annonça qu'il abandonnait l'application d'un nouveau règlement qui aurait imposé des normes plus strictes sur la qualité de l'air. Il excusa ce choix en indiquant qu'il restait important de réduire le fardeau réglementaire pesant sur les entreprises, car l'économie n'aurait pas fini de se redresser (Broder 2011c). D'autres mesures environnementales subirent le même sort pour des raisons similaires (Eilperin 2012). Autrement dit, puisque l'économie battait de l'aile, il n'aurait pas été opportun de se préoccuper de l'environnement. Obama aurait donc utilisé la logique prométhéenne en présentant l'économie et l'environnement comme étant opposés. Étant donné que la rhétorique des emplois verts reposait sur le fait que la protection de l'environnement pouvait être bénéfique pour l'économie, les justifications d'Obama n'étaient effectivement pas compatibles avec cette conception.

De plus, la rhétorique des emplois verts serait devenue moins efficace à cause de la faillite de l'entreprise californienne Solyndra le 31 août 2011. Ce fabricant de panneaux solaires bénéficia d'une garantie de prêt de plus de 500 millions de dollars dans le cadre du

plan de relance d'Obama de 2009 (Wald 2011a). Les républicains à la Chambre des représentants n'hésitèrent pas à présenter cet événement comme une preuve que la politique des emplois verts d'Obama était un échec. Le titre d'une séance d'audiences publiques à la Chambre en disait long : « *How Obama's Green Energy Agenda is Killing Jobs* » (Wald 2011b). Cette faillite aurait donc renforcé l'idée selon laquelle la protection de l'environnement et la prospérité économique étaient incompatibles.

Le débat autour du pipeline *Keystone XL* eut aussi une influence similaire. Ce projet de 7 milliards de dollars visait l'ajout de 2700 km d'oléoduc au réseau de l'entreprise albertaine *TransCanada* dans le but de transporter le pétrole issu de l'exploitation des sables bitumineux de l'Alberta jusqu'aux côtes du golfe du Mexique. Étant entièrement financé par le privé, ce projet fut présenté par ses promoteurs comme une occasion facile de stimuler l'économie des États-Unis. Ses opposants le décrivaient plutôt comme un pas en arrière dans la lutte aux changements climatiques. Puisque *Keystone XL* devait traverser la frontière canadienne, il revenait à l'exécutif et donc à Obama de l'autoriser ou non. Le projet fût conséquemment dépeint des deux côtés comme un test visant à déterminer si Obama prioriserait l'économie ou l'environnement (Gagnon 2012). Après avoir évité la question en reportant sa décision en novembre 2011 (Broder et Frosch 2011), Obama permit finalement la construction de la partie sud du pipeline (Calmes 2012). La décision d'Obama importait toutefois peu puisque la logique prométhéenne s'était déjà imposée. En effet, le simple fait que le débat se soit présenté comme un choix entre l'environnement et l'économie renforça l'idée selon laquelle les deux sont incompatibles.

Avant de conclure, il faut ajouter que selon Yergin (2006), il y aurait récemment eu, aux États-Unis, un changement digne d'intérêt dans la manière de concevoir la production américaine des combustibles fossiles. Il notait que traditionnellement, l'argument justifiant l'augmentation de la production américaine de gaz naturel et de pétrole était celui de la sécurité énergétique. L'auteur précisait que l'exploitation de ces sources d'énergie serait désormais aussi considérée comme un moyen de créer de l'emploi. Annie Lowrey (2012) du *New York Times* abondait dans le même sens en citant une étude indiquant que l'extraction des combustibles fossiles avait créé 9 % de tous les nouveaux emplois aux États-Unis en

2011. Ces emplois venaient principalement de l'explosion du forage du pétrole et du gaz de schiste qui aurait redessiné la « carte énergétique » des États-Unis (Krauss 2012). Toujours selon Yergin :

Last time we were electing a president, it looked like we were running out of energy, and this time we're debating how to use what now seems to be ample resources for decades to come. (Yergin, cité par Krauss 2012)

Désirant montrer qu'il défendait des politiques favorables à la création d'emplois, Obama aurait donc entrepris de faire la promotion de ce « boom » dans l'exploitation américaine de pétrole et de gaz naturel. Cette nouvelle position eut probablement pour effet de marginaliser la rhétorique des emplois verts puisqu'il semblait plus simple de créer des emplois en encourageant la production de combustibles fossiles. Par exemple, à partir du texte 7, au moment où il commença à parler positivement de la création de ces emplois, Obama aurait cessé d'accorder une grande importance aux emplois « verts ».

En résumé, la longueur de la récession, la pression républicaine ainsi qu'une forte hausse dans la production américaine des combustibles fossiles encouragèrent Obama à abandonner la rhétorique des emplois verts. L'échec de cette rhétorique força le président à trouver un autre moyen de démontrer que sa politique énergétique pouvait être créatrice d'emploi. Il se serait donc rabattu sur les emplois provenant de l'augmentation de l'exploitation du pétrole et du gaz naturel. Ainsi, ce revers aurait contribué, à partir de 2011, c'est-à-dire à partir du texte 7, à rendre le discours environnemental d'Obama plus favorable aux combustibles fossiles.

Défense du bilan d'Obama sur l'exploitation des combustibles fossiles

En 2011, les républicains commencèrent à accuser Obama de nuire à l'exploitation des combustibles fossiles. Par exemple en mai 2011, des leaders républicains le blâmèrent de ralentir le forage du pétrole américain (Lehmann 2011). Comme mentionné ci-dessus, ils indiquèrent que la politique d'Obama contribuait à la hausse des prix de l'essence et limitait la création d'emplois dans le secteur des combustibles fossiles.

Considérant l'importance de ces deux enjeux pour le président, il n'est pas surprenant de constater qu'à partir du texte 7, celui-ci commença à défendre sa politique énergétique. Dans

ce texte, il répliqua directement aux gens qui accusaient son administration d'empêcher la production américaine de pétrole en disant qu'au contraire, il avait accordé abondamment des permis d'exploitation.

Avec le début officiel des élections primaires républicaines le 3 janvier 2012 (Zeleny 2012) et l'amorce du duel Obama-Romney le 29 avril 2012 (Zeleny et Rutenberg 2012), les attaques républicaines contre le bilan énergétique d'Obama devinrent de plus en plus intenses. Plus précisément, Romney critiquait systématiquement Obama en affirmant que celui-ci avait toujours favorisé les énergies renouvelables aux combustibles fossiles (Gardner et Helderman 2012). Selon Steven Mufson (2012) du *Washington Post*, devant ces accusations, les démocrates décidèrent de défendre le bilan énergétique du président en soulignant, entre autres, que les importations de pétrole avaient diminué. L'équipe d'Obama avança aussi que la production américaine de pétrole était alors plus élevée qu'elle ne l'avait été depuis 1998 et que la production de gaz naturel n'avait jamais été aussi grande. Cette stratégie se voit très bien dans les textes 8, 9 et 10, puisque le président y défendait vigoureusement son bilan d'exploitation de combustibles fossiles.

En bref, les attaques répétées des républicains à propos du bilan énergétique d'Obama auraient encouragé celui-ci à se vanter de l'augmentation de la production de combustibles fossiles sous son administration et à décrire en termes strictement positifs l'exploitation de ce type d'énergie. Cette dynamique fut particulièrement évidente durant le deuxième débat présidentiel, alors que, selon une journaliste de *The Guardian*, Obama aurait tenté de se présenter comme étant non moins favorable aux combustibles fossiles que Romney (Goldenberg 2012).

Une influence synergique

Les trois circonstances identifiées dans cette section ont donc forcé Obama à modifier son discours environnemental. Celles-ci cadrent d'ailleurs bien dans la liste des facteurs exerçant une influence sur le président (le Congrès, les groupes d'intérêt, l'état de l'économie, les facteurs physiques et l'entourage du président) présentée au premier chapitre. En effet, la hausse du prix de l'essence peut être considérée comme un facteur affectant

négativement l'état de l'économie auquel le président doit impérativement répondre. Ensuite, l'échec de la rhétorique des emplois verts a principalement été causé par la longueur de la récession (facteur économique), la pression républicaine qui agissait comme un groupe d'intérêt au bénéfice de l'industrie des combustibles fossiles et l'augmentation de la production de ce type d'énergie (facteur physique). Enfin, l'obligation d'Obama de défendre son bilan énergétique a principalement été provoquée par les attaques des républicains et du lobby des combustibles fossiles (groupe d'intérêt).

L'influence de l'entourage du président a quant à elle été plus subtile. Elle peut principalement se constater par la démission au début de 2011 de Browner de son poste d'assistante auprès du président pour les questions énergétiques et climatiques. Sheppard (2011a) indique que selon des analystes politiques et des environnementalistes, ce départ signifiait que la question climatique était définitivement exclue des priorités politiques de l'administration Obama. Cette appréhension a en partie été confirmée quelques mois plus tard par la décision de la Maison-Blanche de ne pas remplacer Browner et de confier les questions climatiques au Conseil de la politique intérieure (Sheppard 2011b). Broder (2011a) ajoute que cette démission a laissé la Maison-Blanche sans voix forte pour défendre les enjeux environnementaux et que l'administration serait ainsi devenue plus réceptive aux préoccupations économiques. Son absence auprès du président aurait ainsi contribué à laisser plus de place aux combustibles fossiles dans les propos d'Obama.

Il est intéressant de noter que les trois circonstances présentées se renforcent mutuellement, amplifiant ainsi leur influence sur le discours du président. Effectivement, la hausse du prix du pétrole a rendu l'argument des emplois verts difficile à défendre et a forcé Obama à justifier son bilan. L'échec de la rhétorique des emplois verts a obligé Obama à trouver d'autres moyens de faire la promotion de sa politique énergétique, ce qu'il a fait en montrant qu'il tentait de réduire le coût de l'essence et en se disant favorable à l'exploitation des combustibles fossiles. La défense de son bilan énergétique a renforcé l'idée selon laquelle le président a un certain contrôle sur le prix de l'essence et a rendu encore moins convaincant l'argument des emplois verts.

En conclusion, il importe de rappeler qu'au début du mandat d'Obama, personne n'aurait pu prévoir qu'après quelques années au pouvoir, le président se retrouverait à militer pour l'exploitation des combustibles fossiles. En effet, lors de l'élection présidentielle de 2008, il semblait y avoir un consensus pour engager les États-Unis dans la lutte aux changements climatiques. Comme l'indique Klauss, les combustibles fossiles auraient cependant su s'imposer dans le débat énergétique au détriment de la lutte aux changements climatiques :

In a twist few would have predicted when Mr. Obama first entered the White House and much as it may dismay him, fossil fuels have eclipsed renewable energy and climate change in the national discussion — even as climate scientists warn that the droughts that scorch corn crops and the faster melting of Arctic ice and glaciers around the world are signs of things to come. (Krauss 2012)

Considérant ce revirement de situation, qui s'explique en grande partie par les circonstances venant d'être présentées, il n'est donc pas surprenant de constater qu'Obama ait dû ajuster son discours environnemental.

CONCLUSION

L'objectif de ce mémoire était de vérifier si le discours environnemental d'Obama pouvait s'apparenter à celui de la modernisation écologique. La thèse défendue était qu'au début du mandat d'Obama, son discours environnemental avait plusieurs points en commun avec la modernisation écologique, mais que celui-ci commença à changer en 2010 et 2011.

Afin de confirmer cette thèse, une analyse de discours d'un corpus de dix textes dans lesquels Obama abordait l'enjeu climatique a été effectuée. Ceux-ci furent d'abord étudiés de manière individuelle pour ensuite être comparés entre eux. La comparaison permit de déterminer de quelle manière le discours environnemental d'Obama avait évolué et d'identifier les éléments discursifs qui avaient changé au cours de son mandat.

Cette analyse confirma la thèse de ce mémoire. En effet, au début du mandat d'Obama, son discours ressemblait considérablement à la modernisation écologique, mais il finit par se rapprocher du discours prométhéen en 2011. Plus précisément, deux changements furent observés. D'une part, même si durant toute sa présidence, Obama véhiculait plusieurs idées liées au discours de la modernisation écologique, au début de celle-ci, il alla plus loin dans cette logique en proposant une restructuration de l'économie des États-Unis. D'autre part, à partir de 2011, l'occupant de la Maison-Blanche rejeta certains éléments discursifs de la modernisation écologique pour tenir des propos s'apparentant au discours prométhéen. Par exemple, Obama n'hésitait plus à parler positivement de l'exploitation des combustibles fossiles.

Le premier changement fut expliqué par l'échec en 2010 de l'*American Power Act*. Il faut rappeler qu'une législation climatique aurait permis de restructurer l'économie comme le prescrit la modernisation écologique. Quand il apparut impossible d'adopter une telle législation climatique au Congrès, en grande partie à cause de l'élection d'une majorité républicaine à la Chambre des représentants en novembre 2010, Obama dut modifier son discours environnemental. En effet, puisqu'il n'était plus possible de restructurer l'économie, le président devait se contenter de propositions moins ambitieuses. Le deuxième changement fut expliqué par une série de circonstances, dont la hausse du prix de l'essence en 2011, l'échec de la rhétorique des emplois verts d'Obama ainsi que les attaques républicaines contre son bilan énergétique. Ces circonstances poussèrent Obama à adopter une position plus favorable envers les combustibles fossiles.

Pertinence de l'approche discursive pour étudier la politique environnementale

L'ensemble de ces conclusions indique qu'une approche théorique basée sur le concept de discours permet une analyse de l'évolution du discours d'Obama un peu plus poussée que celles qui avaient été faites jusqu'ici. En effet, la typologie des discours environnementaux a offert un cadre d'analyse très bien adapté à la comparaison de textes. Elle a par exemple donné des points de référence permettant de déterminer s'il y a eu évolution entre les textes et d'identifier les principaux changements dans le discours d'Obama.

Il faut toutefois dire que la typologie utilisée dans ce mémoire est fortement simplifiée. Effectivement, elle ne contient que trois discours, alors que les auteurs dont elle est inspirée en proposent davantage. Il ne serait cependant pas difficile d'élargir la typologie dans le but de procéder à une étude encore plus fine du discours environnemental d'Obama. Il serait par exemple intéressant d'ajouter un discours afin de mettre en évidence le fait qu'il y a plusieurs façons d'interpréter les liens entre la sécurité des États-Unis et les enjeux climatiques et énergétiques.

Un tel cadre d'analyse permettrait aussi de comparer les présidences entre elles. En effet, en ayant une typologie adaptée aux différentes manières de concevoir l'environnement depuis que cet enjeu s'est imposé sur la scène politique américaine durant les années 60, il serait

possible d'identifier le principal discours environnemental défendu par chaque occupant de la Maison-Blanche ainsi que la façon dont celui-ci a évolué. Une telle étude permettrait donc de comparer les présidents entre eux.

Analyse du « discours sur l'état de l'Union » de 2013

En terminant, il serait malhonnête de faire abstraction du fait que le soir même de sa victoire à l'élection présidentielle de 2012, Obama a semblé une seconde fois fortement changer son discours environnemental. En effet, après avoir évité les enjeux climatiques durant toute la campagne électorale, Obama a semblé vouloir s'y intéresser à nouveau après sa victoire contre Mitt Romney (Eilperin et Mufson 2012). Qui plus est, selon Stevenson et Broder (2013), il aurait fait de la lutte aux changements climatiques son engagement politique le plus proéminent de son « discours sur l'état de l'Union » de 2013. Puisqu'il a été observé dans l'analyse de ce mémoire qu'Obama avait accordé de moins en moins d'importance aux enjeux climatiques, au court de son premier mandat, il est digne d'intérêt de constater qu'il aurait subitement recommencé à se pencher sur la question après sa victoire en 2012. Afin de vérifier de manière rigoureuse si son discours environnemental a réellement changé le soir de l'élection, il semble pertinent d'analyser le texte du « discours sur l'état de l'Union » datant du 12 février 2013 (en appendice) pour ensuite le comparer avec les autres.

Dans ce texte, Obama commence par présenter le bilan énergétique de son premier mandat. Il affirme que, sous son administration, la production de pétrole et de gaz naturel a augmenté, se vantant ainsi d'avoir autorisé la production de plus de combustibles fossiles. Plus loin dans son texte, il précise en outre que le gaz naturel est une énergie propre et qu'il a l'intention d'accélérer l'émission des permis d'exploitation de pétrole et de gaz. Tous ces éléments s'inscrivent dans la logique du discours prométhéen.

Dans son bilan, il ajoute cependant que ses politiques ont augmenté l'efficacité énergétique des voitures et ont doublé l'énergie produite par le vent et le soleil. Il précise ensuite qu'en plus d'être bénéfiques pour l'environnement, ses politiques ont créé des dizaines de milliers d'emplois. Un peu plus loin, il propose de poursuivre dans cette voie afin de dominer le marché international des énergies propres et ainsi créer encore plus d'emplois

dans ce secteur. Il donne l'exemple d'investissements dans les infrastructures, comme les trains à haute vitesse et un réseau électrique intelligent, qui pourraient créer de nombreux emplois. Obama prend donc le soin de préciser que ses politiques environnementales auraient aussi de nombreux avantages économiques. Cette partie de son texte s'inscrit donc dans la modernisation écologique.

Il termine son bilan en affirmant sur un ton apocalyptique que les émissions de GES qui menacent la planète ont diminué durant son administration. Sur le même ton, le président poursuit en disant : « *But for the sake of our children and our future, we must do more to combat climate change.* » Il fait ensuite le lien de manière prudente entre les changements climatiques et les vagues de chaleur, les sécheresses, les feux de forêt et les inondations qui deviennent plus fréquents et intenses. Obama donne l'exemple des événements ayant eu lieu durant l'été et l'automne 2012 : l'ouragan Sandy, la pire sécheresse depuis plusieurs décennies et les pires feux de forêt jamais vus par certains États. Selon lui, il faut faire confiance au jugement de la science et agir. Ce segment s'inscrit parfaitement dans le discours survivaliste non seulement en raison du ton apocalyptique cité plus haut, mais également parce qu'Obama insiste sur la nécessité de sauver l'humanité grâce à la science.

Obama se rapproche cependant à nouveau de la modernisation écologique en disant qu'il est possible de progresser considérablement sur l'enjeu climatique tout en maintenant une bonne croissance économique. Il encourage le Congrès à adopter une législation climatique bipartisane basée sur un mécanisme de marché. Stavín (2001, 1) définit ce type de mécanisme comme une réglementation qui valorise certains comportements favorables pour l'environnement en offrant des incitatifs financiers. Par exemple, en imposant un coût aux émissions de GES, une bourse du carbone incite les entreprises à adopter des procédures plus propres. Il s'agit d'un mécanisme de marché puisque ce sont les forces du marché qui déterminent les procédures les plus rentables pour chaque entreprise et non le gouvernement. Il est cependant intéressant de noter qu'il choisit de donner en exemple les législations climatiques présentées par les sénateurs McCain et Lieberman en 2003, 2005 et 2007 et qu'il ne prononce pas les mots « *cap-and-trade* ». Il semble ainsi vouloir éviter de mentionner l'échec de l'*American Power Act* de 2010 de Kerry, Graham et Lieberman. Peu importe ce qui

se cache derrière ses propos, il reste qu'en proposant un mécanisme de marché, il s'inscrit dans la modernisation écologique puisque ce discours favorise ce type de réglementation.

Étant probablement conscient que le Congrès risque de ne pas coopérer, Obama menace de s'attaquer lui-même aux changements climatiques en utilisant son pouvoir exécutif et les décrets présidentiels. Plus précisément, il promet ceci :

I will direct my Cabinet to come up with executive actions we can take, now and in the future, to reduce pollution, prepare our communities for the consequences of climate change, and speed the transition to more sustainable sources of energy.

À cause du ton apocalyptique de ses propos, mais surtout par le fait qu'il propose de prendre des décisions unilatérales, Obama s'inscrit encore une fois parfaitement dans le discours survivaliste. Afin de bien saisir l'ampleur de cette déclaration, il est important de rappeler que la modernisation écologique vise depuis son apparition à remplacer l'approche conventionnelle de réglementation de l'environnement, qualifiée de « *command-and-control* » par ses détracteurs pour sa rigidité au profit d'une approche plus flexible (Hajer 1995, 31; Dryzek 2005, 97; Cohen 2006, 529). En effet, l'approche « *command-and-control* » recommande par exemple l'utilisation d'une technologie particulière de contrôle de la pollution dans les usines ou encore impose des normes de pollution uniformes pour toutes les entreprises (Stavins 2001, 1-2). Cette approche a été critiquée pour son manque de flexibilité et c'est pourquoi la modernisation écologique préfère des mécanismes de marché qui permettent en théorie au marché de trouver les solutions optimales d'un point de vue économique. Ainsi, Obama laisse au Congrès une dernière chance d'adopter une législation climatique fondée sur un mécanisme de marché, comme une bourse du carbone, qui offrirait cette flexibilité, mais si celui-ci n'y arrive pas, le président menace de procéder de manière unilatérale avec des décisions exécutives qui risqueraient d'être plus rigides. Obama adopte donc ici une attitude très survivaliste puisque le problème des changements climatiques apparaît à ses yeux comme suffisamment important pour renoncer à l'adoption de politiques flexibles, comme celles qu'il propose depuis le texte 1, et ce, dans le but de sauver les générations futures.

Il reprend enfin un discours plus proche de la modernisation écologique en proposant de

mettre une partie des profits de l'exploitation du pétrole et du gaz dans un fonds spécial. L'objectif de ce fond serait de financer le développement de la technologie qui permettrait éventuellement de se débarrasser du pétrole et ainsi, de libérer les familles et les entreprises des impacts des fluctuations de prix. Ce passage indique qu'Obama cherche à nuancer son attitude envers les combustibles fossiles. En effet, l'exploitation de ceux-ci devrait financer la recherche visant à réduire la consommation de ce type d'énergie. Le tout sous-entend que l'utilisation de ces sources d'énergie est temporaire, le temps d'effectuer une transition énergétique, exactement selon la logique de la modernisation écologique.

Comparaison avec les autres textes

Ce texte se démarque de tous les autres pour la simple raison qu'Obama n'a jamais été aussi loin avec le discours survivaliste. En effet, même si dans les premiers textes analysés, il a adopté un ton apocalyptique pour justifier ses politiques, il proposait toujours des solutions en phase avec la modernisation écologique. Ainsi, il a proposé une bourse du carbone pour ensuite se contenter d'une législation qui rendrait les énergies propres rentables, deux solutions basées sur des mécanismes de marché. Dans ce nouveau texte, il suggère encore ce même genre de solutions, mais il ajoute que si elles ne sont pas appliquées par le Congrès, il prendra les choses en main. Une telle attitude sous-entend que les changements climatiques suscitent un sentiment d'urgence, ce qui s'inscrit dans le discours survivaliste. De plus, puisque les actions qu'il promet de poser de manière unilatérale pourraient bien être rigides, celles-ci pourraient se trouver en contradiction avec la modernisation écologique qui prône une approche plus flexible.

Dans ce texte, Obama présente aussi un argumentaire similaire à celui qu'il employait dans les derniers textes étudiés. En effet, il parle de la compatibilité entre la protection de l'environnement et la croissance économique et il accorde une place importante à l'innovation et au rôle du gouvernement. Il évite cependant de proposer de transformer l'économie. Ainsi, même si l'aspect survivaliste de son discours a repris de la vigueur, son penchant pour la modernisation écologique n'est pas redevenu aussi intense qu'en 2008 et 2009.

Enfin, pour ce qui est du discours prométhéen, le président se vante toujours de

l'augmentation de l'exploitation des combustibles fossiles comme dans les derniers textes, mais il modère quelque peu ses intentions. En effet, il sous-entend qu'il est nécessaire de passer à d'autres formes d'énergie. Ainsi, il combine la nécessité d'effectuer une transition énergétique des premiers textes à la défense de l'exploitation des combustibles fossiles des derniers. Cette position nuancée rend plus difficile l'association de ses propos au discours prométhéen.

Le début de nouveau cycle décevant ou d'une nouvelle ère?

Que faut-il donc penser des conclusions du « discours sur l'état de l'Union » de 2013? Il faut tout d'abord rappeler que ses propos pourraient avoir été influencés par les catastrophes climatiques qu'il a lui-même décrites. En effet, il est facile d'établir un lien entre les changements climatiques et les records de température, la sécheresse, les feux de forêt et l'ouragan Sandy. Obama a donc sans doute jugé qu'il pourrait profiter de l'impact que ces catastrophes ont eu sur l'imaginaire populaire pour adopter un discours plus favorable à la lutte aux changements climatiques. Cette manière de concevoir ce nouveau texte permet de faire le lien avec la brève résurgence du discours survivaliste dans le texte 10. En effet, Obama y parlait aussi de sécheresse et de feux de forêt puisque ces événements s'étaient déjà produits durant l'été 2012, c'est-à-dire avant la présentation de ce texte. Il reste cependant que la seule catastrophe climatique à avoir eu lieu entre les deux textes est l'ouragan Sandy qui a frappé à la fin octobre 2012. Cette catastrophe a certes pu influencer le président, mais une question s'impose : si Sandy a réellement convaincu le président de recommencer à parler explicitement des changements climatiques, pourquoi a-t-il attendu de l'avoir emporté le 6 novembre 2012 pour le faire? Il aurait eu une semaine pour aborder le sujet entre l'ouragan et l'élection.

C'est ainsi qu'une autre hypothèse s'impose. Serait-il possible qu'Obama ait seulement mis en veilleuse ses ambitions climatiques le temps d'obtenir son deuxième mandat et qu'il soit désormais prêt à reprendre ses ambitions climatiques de 2009 et 2010? Cette idée sous-entend d'abord qu'il aurait évalué en 2011 que la question climatique serait un enjeu perdant d'un point de vue électoral en 2012. Cette hypothèse permet ainsi de comprendre comment le discours d'Obama a pu autant changer entre septembre 2012 et janvier 2013. Il demeure que

cette explication ne permet pas de comprendre pourquoi Obama aurait soudainement décidé de prendre les choses en main après avoir été accusé de ne pas s'impliquer suffisamment au cours de son premier mandat et principalement dans la saga de l'*American Power Act*.

Une dernière hypothèse suggère qu'il aurait décidé de faire de la lutte aux changements climatiques l'accomplissement qui définirait l'ensemble de sa présidence. Comme le mentionne une membre de son administration citée dans le *New York Times* : « *He knows this is a legacy issue.* » (Broder 2013). En d'autres mots, le changement de discours pourrait s'expliquer par le fait qu'il cherche à laisser sa marque dans l'histoire des États-Unis en gagnant la bataille climatique. Pour y arriver, il doit agir de manière plus proactive puisque la stratégie qu'il a adoptée durant son premier mandat n'a pas fonctionné. Cette observation permettrait d'expliquer l'ampleur du changement de discours et surtout la nouvelle détermination dont il fait preuve.

Peu importe l'ampleur de son ambition, il demeure que le résultat ne dépend pas entièrement de lui. Certes, il peut contourner la Chambre des représentants, qui demeure sous contrôle républicain, en utilisant son pouvoir exécutif comme il propose de le faire dans ce nouveau texte, mais plusieurs autres embûches pourraient se présenter. D'abord, la Chambre pourrait essayer de limiter le pouvoir de l'exécutif. Elle a d'ailleurs tenté à plusieurs reprises de le faire en empêchant l'*Environmental Protection Agency* de réglementer les émissions de GES comme le *Clean Air Act* lui permet de le faire (Chemnick 2011). Ce dernier point est important puisque cette loi servirait aussi de base juridique à Obama pour agir sans la collaboration du Congrès. Ensuite, d'autres événements mineurs pourraient nuire au président, comme la faiblesse de l'économie, une hausse des prix de l'énergie ou même un climat plus froid que la normale³⁰. De plus, par rapport à la dernière hypothèse, il reste à voir si son pouvoir exécutif serait suffisant pour lui permettre de laisser sa marque. De minces progrès ou un nouvel échec pourraient effectivement ternir sa place dans l'histoire. Lizza

³⁰ En février 2010, le *New York Times* rapportait que des records de précipitation de neige servaient d'argument à certains républicains, dont le sénateur James Inhofe, afin de remettre en doute la science des changements climatiques (Broder 2010a).

arrive d'ailleurs à la même conclusion dans son article sur l'échec de l'*American Power Act* en citant un lobbyiste qui parlait de la décision d'Obama, au début de son premier mandat, de se concentrer sur la réforme de la santé au lieu des changements climatiques :

I believe Barack Obama understands that fifty years from now no one's going to know about health care. [...] Economic historians will know that we had a recession at this time. Everybody is going to be thinking about whether Barack Obama was the James Buchanan of climate change. (Anonyme, cité par Lizza 2010)

Ainsi, à l'instar de Buchanan³¹, qui est passé à l'histoire comme le président qui n'a pas été en mesure de bien gérer l'enjeu central de son époque, la question de l'esclavage, Obama laissera-t-il sa marque comme celui qui n'a pas réussi à s'attaquer à l'enjeu qui définit le début du XXI^e siècle, les changements climatiques?

³¹ Nate Silver (2013) est arrivé à la conclusion que Buchanan serait le pire président de l'histoire des États-Unis selon des sondages auprès de spécialistes de la présidence.

APPENDICE A

TRANSCRIPTIONS DES TEXTES D'OBAMA

A.1 Transcription du texte 1

We meet at a moment when this country is facing a set of challenges greater than any we've seen in generations. Right now, our brave men and women in uniform are fighting two different wars while terrorists plot their next attack. Our changing climate is placing our planet in peril. Our economy is in turmoil and our families are struggling with rising costs and falling incomes; with lost jobs and lost homes and lost faith in the American Dream. And for too long, our leaders in Washington have been unwilling or unable to do anything about it.

That is why this election could be the most important of our lifetime. When it comes to our economy, our security, and the very future of our planet, the choices we make in November and over the next few years will shape the next decade, if not the century. And central to all of these major challenges is the question of what we will do about our addiction to foreign oil.

Without a doubt, this addiction is one of the most dangerous and urgent threats this nation has ever faced -- from the gas prices that are wiping out your paychecks and straining

businesses to the jobs that are disappearing from this state; from the instability and terror bred in the Middle East to the rising oceans and record drought and spreading famine that could engulf our planet.

It's also a threat that goes to the very heart of who we are as a nation, and who we will be. Will we be the generation that leaves our children a planet in decline, or a world that is clean, and safe, and thriving? Will we allow ourselves to be held hostage to the whims of tyrants and dictators who control the world's oil wells? Or will we control our own energy and our own destiny? Will America watch as the clean energy jobs and industries of the future flourish in countries like Spain, Japan, or Germany? Or will we create them here, in the greatest country on Earth, with the most talented, productive workers in the world?

As Americans, we know the answers to these questions. We know that we cannot sustain a future powered by a fuel that is rapidly disappearing. Not when we purchase \$700 million worth of oil every single day from some of the world's most unstable and hostile nations -- Middle Eastern regimes that will control nearly all of the world's oil by 2030. Not when the rapid growth of countries like China and India mean that we're consuming more of this dwindling resource faster than we ever imagined. We know that we can't sustain this kind of future.

But we also know that we've been talking about this issue for decades. We've heard promises about energy independence from every single President since Richard Nixon. We've heard talk about curbing the use of fossil fuels in State of the Union addresses since the oil embargo of 1973.

Back then, we imported about a third of our oil. Now, we import more than half. Back then, global warming was the theory of a few scientists. Now, it is a fact that is melting our glaciers and setting off dangerous weather patterns as we speak. Then, the technology and innovation to create new sources of clean, affordable, renewable energy was a generation away. Today, you can find it in the research labs of this university and in the design centers of this state's legendary auto industry. It's in the chemistry labs that are laying the building

blocks for cheaper, more efficient solar panels, and it's in the re-born factories that are churning out more wind turbines every day all across this country.

Despite all this, here we are, in another election, still talking about our oil addiction; still more dependent than ever. Why?

You won't hear me say this too often, but I couldn't agree more with the explanation that Senator McCain offered a few weeks ago. He said, "Our dangerous dependence on foreign oil has been thirty years in the making, and was caused by the failure of politicians in Washington to think long-term about the future of the country."

What Senator McCain neglected to mention was that during those thirty years, he was in Washington for twenty-six of them. And in all that time, he did little to reduce our dependence on foreign oil. He voted against increased fuel efficiency standards and opposed legislation that included tax credits for more efficient cars. He voted against renewable sources of energy. Against clean biofuels. Against solar power. (OTCBB:SOPW) Against wind power. Against an energy bill that -- while far from perfect -- represented the largest investment in renewable sources of energy in the history of this country. So when Senator McCain talks about the failure of politicians in Washington to do anything about our energy crisis, it's important to remember that he's been a part of that failure. Now, after years of inaction, and in the face of public frustration over rising gas prices, the only energy proposal he's really promoting is more offshore drilling -- a position he recently adopted that has become the centerpiece of his plan, and one that will not make a real dent in current gas prices or meet the long-term challenge of energy independence.

George Bush's own Energy Department has said that if we opened up new areas to drilling today, we wouldn't see a single drop of oil for seven years. Seven years. And Senator McCain knows that, which is why he admitted that his plan would only provide "psychological" relief to consumers. He also knows that if we opened up and drilled on every single square inch of our land and our shores, we would still find only three percent of the world's oil reserves. Three percent for a country that uses 25% of the world's oil. Even Texas

oilman Boone Pickens, who's calling for major new investments in alternative energy, has said, "this is one emergency we can't drill our way out of."

Now, increased domestic oil exploration certainly has its place as we make our economy more fuel-efficient and transition to other, renewable, American-made sources of energy. But it is not the solution. It is a political answer of the sort Washington has given us for three decades.

There are genuine ways in which we can provide some short-term relief from high gas prices -- relief to the mother who's cutting down on groceries because of gas prices, or the man I met in Pennsylvania who lost his job and can't even afford to drive around and look for a new one. I believe we should immediately give every working family in America a \$1,000 energy rebate, and we should pay for it with part of the record profits that the oil companies are making right now.

I also believe that in the short-term, as we transition to renewable energy, we can and should increase our domestic production of oil and natural gas. But we should start by telling the oil companies to drill on the 68 million acres they currently have access to but haven't touched. And if they don't, we should require them to give up their leases to someone who will. We should invest in the technology that can help us recover more from existing oil fields, and speed up the process of recovering oil and gas resources in shale formations in Montana and North Dakota; Texas and Arkansas and in parts of the West and Central Gulf of Mexico. We should sell 70 million barrels of oil from our Strategic Petroleum Reserve for less expensive crude, which in the past has lowered gas prices within two weeks. Over the next five years, we should also lease more of the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska for oil and gas production. And we should also tap more of our substantial natural gas reserves and work with the Canadian government to finally build the Alaska Natural Gas Pipeline, delivering clean natural gas and creating good jobs in the process.

But the truth is, none of these steps will come close to seriously reducing our energy dependence in the long-term. We simply cannot pretend, as Senator McCain does, that we

can drill our way out of this problem. We need a much bolder and much bigger set of solutions. We have to make a serious, nationwide commitment to developing new sources of energy and we have to do it right away.

Last week, Washington finally made some progress on this. A group of Democrat and Republican Senators sat down and came up with a compromise on energy that includes many of the proposals I've worked on as a Senator and many of the steps I've been calling for on this campaign. It's a plan that would invest in renewable fuels and batteries for fuel-efficient cars, help automakers re-tool, and make a real investment in renewable sources of energy.

Like all compromises, this one has its drawbacks. It includes a limited amount of new offshore drilling, and while I still don't believe that's a particularly meaningful short-term or long-term solution, I am willing to consider it if it's necessary to actually pass a comprehensive plan. I am not interested in making the perfect the enemy of the good -- particularly since there is so much good in this compromise that would actually reduce our dependence on foreign oil.

And yet, while the compromise is a good first step and a good faith effort, I believe that we must go even further, and here's why -- breaking our oil addiction is one of the greatest challenges our generation will ever face. It will take nothing less than a complete transformation of our economy. This transformation will be costly, and given the fiscal disaster we will inherit from the last Administration, it will likely require us to defer some other priorities.

It is also a transformation that will require more than just a few government programs. Energy independence will require an all-hands-on-deck effort from America -- effort from our scientists and entrepreneurs; from businesses and from every American citizen. Factories will have to re-tool and re-design. Businesses will need to find ways to emit less carbon dioxide. All of us will need to buy more of the fuel-efficient cars built by this state, and find new ways to improve efficiency and save energy in our own homes and businesses.

This will not be easy. And it will not happen overnight. And if anyone tries to tell you otherwise, they are either fooling themselves or trying to fool you.

But I know we can do this. We can do this because we are Americans. We do the improbable. We beat great odds. We rally together to meet whatever challenge stands in our way. That's what we've always done -- and it's what we must do now. For the sake of our economy, our security, and the future of our planet, we must end the age of oil in our time.

Creating a new energy economy isn't just a challenge to meet, it's an opportunity to seize -- an opportunity that will create new businesses, new industries, and millions of new jobs. Jobs that pay well. Jobs that can't be outsourced. Good, union jobs. For a state that has lost so many and struggled so much in recent years, this is an opportunity to rebuild and revive your economy. As your wonderful Governor has said, "Any time you pick up a newspaper and see the terms 'climate change' or 'global warming,' just think: 'jobs for Michigan.'" You are seeing the potential already. Already, there are 50,000 jobs in your clean energy sector and 300 companies. But now is the time to accelerate that growth, both here and across the nation.

If I am President, I will immediately direct the full resources of the federal government and the full energy of the private sector to a single, overarching goal -- in ten years, we will eliminate the need for oil from the entire Middle East and Venezuela. To do this, we will invest \$150 billion over the next ten years and leverage billions more in private capital to build a new energy economy that harnesses American energy and creates five million new American jobs.

There are three major steps I will take to achieve this goal -- steps that will yield real results by the end of my first term in office.

First, we will help states like Michigan build the fuel-efficient cars we need, and we will get one million 150 mile-per-gallon plug-in hybrids on our roads within six years.

I know how much the auto industry and the auto workers of this state have struggled

over the last decade or so. But I also know where I want the fuel-efficient cars of tomorrow to be built -- not in Japan, not in China, but right here in the United States of America. Right here in the state of Michigan.

We can do this. When I arrived in Washington, I reached across the aisle to come up with a plan to raise the mileage standards in our cars for the first time in thirty years -- a plan that won support from Democrats and Republicans who had never supported raising fuel standards before. I also led the bipartisan effort to invest in the technology necessary to build plug-in hybrid cars.

As President, I will accelerate those efforts to meet our urgent need. With technology we have on the shelf today, we will raise our fuel mileage standards four percent every year. We'll invest more in the research and development of those plug-in hybrids, specifically focusing on the battery technology. We'll leverage private sector funding to bring these cars directly to American consumers, and we'll give consumers a \$7,000 tax credit to buy these vehicles. But most importantly, I'll provide \$4 billion in loans and tax credits to American auto plants and manufacturers so that they can re-tool their factories and build these cars. That's how we'll not only protect our auto industry and our auto workers, but help them thrive in a 21st century economy.

What's more, these efforts will lead to an explosion of innovation here in Michigan. At the turn of the 20th century, there were literally hundreds of car companies offering a wide choice of steam vehicles and gas engines. I believe we are entering a similar era of expanding consumer choices, from higher mileage cars, to new electric entrants like GM's Volt, to flex fuel cars and trucks powered by biofuels and driven by Michigan innovation.

The second step I'll take is to require that 10% of our energy comes from renewable sources by the end of my first term -- more than double what we have now. To meet these goals, we will invest more in the clean technology research and development that's occurring in labs and research facilities all across the country and right here at MSU, where you're working with farm owners to develop this state's wind potential and developing

nanotechnology that will make solar cells cheaper.

I'll also extend the Production Tax Credit for five years to encourage the production of renewable energy like wind power, solar power, and geothermal energy. It was because of this credit that wind power grew 45% last year, the largest growth in history. Experts have said that Michigan has the second best potential for wind generation and production in the entire country. And as the world's largest producer of the material that makes solar panels work, this tax credit would also help states like Michigan grow solar industries that are already creating hundreds of new jobs.

We'll also invest federal resources, including tax incentives and government contracts, into developing next generation biofuels. By 2022, I will make it a goal to have 6 billion gallons of our fuel come from sustainable, affordable biofuels and we'll make sure that we have the infrastructure to deliver that fuel in place. Here in Michigan, you're actually a step ahead of the game with your first-ever commercial cellulosic ethanol plant, which will lead the way by turning wood into clean-burning fuel. It's estimated that each new advanced biofuels plant can add up to 120 jobs, expand a local town's tax base by \$70 million per year, and boost local household income by \$6.7 million annually.

In addition, we'll find safer ways to use nuclear power and store nuclear waste. And we'll invest in the technology that will allow us to use more coal, America's most abundant energy source, with the goal of creating five first-of-a-kind coal-fired demonstration plants with carbon capture and sequestration.

Of course, too often, the problem is that all of this new energy technology never makes it out of the lab and onto the market because there's too much risk and too much cost involved in starting commercial-scale clean energy businesses. So we will remove some of this cost and this risk by directing billions in loans and capital to entrepreneurs who are willing to create clean energy businesses and clean energy jobs right here in America.

As we develop new sources of energy and electricity, we will also need to modernize our

national utility grid so that it's accommodating to new sources of power, more efficient, and more reliable. That's an investment that will also create hundreds of thousands of jobs, and one that I will make as President.

Finally, the third step I will take is to call on businesses, government, and the American people to meet the goal of reducing our demand for electricity 15% by the end of the next decade. This is by far the fastest, easiest, and cheapest way to reduce our energy consumption -- and it will save us \$130 billion on our energy bills.

Since DuPont implemented an energy efficiency program in 1990, the company has significantly reduced its pollution and cut its energy bills by \$3 billion. The state of California has implemented such a successful efficiency strategy that while electricity consumption grew 60% in this country over the last three decades, it didn't grow at all in California.

There is no reason America can't do the same thing. We will set a goal of making our new buildings 50% more efficient over the next four years. And we'll follow the lead of California and change the way utilities make money so that their profits aren't tied to how much energy we use, but how much energy we save.

In just ten years, these steps will produce enough renewable energy to replace all the oil we import from the Middle East. Along with the cap-and-trade program I've proposed, we will reduce our dangerous carbon emissions 80% by 2050 and slow the warming of our planet. And we will create five million new jobs in the process.

If these sound like far-off goals, just think about what we can do in the next few years. One million plug-in hybrid cars on the road. Doubling our energy from clean, renewable sources like wind power or solar power and 2 billion gallons of affordable biofuels. New buildings that 50% more energy efficient.

So there is a real choice in this election -- a choice about what kind of future we want for

this country and this planet.

Senator McCain would not take the steps or achieve the goals that I outlined today. His plan invests very little in renewable sources of energy and he's opposed helping the auto industry re-tool. Like George Bush and Dick Cheney before him, he sees more drilling as the answer to all of our energy problems, and like them, he's found a receptive audience in the very same oil companies that have blocked our progress for so long. In fact, he raised more than one million dollars from big oil just last month, most of which came after he announced his plan for offshore drilling in a room full of cheering oil executives. His initial reaction to the bipartisan energy compromise was to reject it because it took away tax breaks for oil companies. And even though he doesn't want to spend much on renewable energy, he's actually proposed giving \$4 billion more in tax breaks to the biggest oil companies in America -- including \$1.2 billion to Exxon-Mobil. (NYSE:XOM) This is a corporation that just recorded the largest profit in the history of the United States. . This is the company that, last quarter, made \$1,500 every second. That's more than \$300,000 in the time it takes you to fill up a tank with gas that's costing you more than \$4-a-gallon. And Senator McCain not only wants them to keep every dime of that money, he wants to give them more.

So make no mistake -- the oil companies have placed their bet on Senator McCain, and if he wins, they will continue to cash in while our families and our economy suffer and our future is put in jeopardy.

Well that's not the future I see for America. I will not pretend the goals I laid out today aren't ambitious. They are. I will not pretend we can achieve them without cost, or without sacrifice, or without the contribution of almost every American citizen.

But I will say that these goals are possible. And I will say that achieving them is absolutely necessary if we want to keep America safe and prosperous in the 21st century.

I want you all to think for a minute about the next four years, and even the next ten years. We can continue down the path we've been traveling. We can keep making small,

piece-meal investments in renewable energy and keep sending billions of our hard-earned dollars to oil company executives and Middle Eastern dictators. We can watch helplessly as the price of gas rises and falls because of some foreign crisis we have no control over, and uncover every single barrel of oil buried beneath this country only to realize that we don't have enough for a few years, let alone a century. We can watch other countries create the industries and the jobs that will fuel our future, and leave our children a planet that grows more dangerous and unlivable by the day.

Or we can choose another future. We can decide that we will face the realities of the 21st century by building a 21st century economy. In just a few years, we can watch cars that run on a plug-in battery come off the same assembly lines that once produced the first Ford and the first Chrysler. We can see shuttered factories open their doors to manufacturers that sell wind turbines and solar panels that will power our homes and our businesses. We can watch as millions of new jobs with good pay and good benefits are created for American workers, and we can take pride as the technologies, and discoveries, and industries of the future flourish in the United States of America. We can lead the world, secure our nation, and meet our moral obligations to future generations.

This is the choice that we face in the months ahead. This is the challenge we must meet. This is the opportunity we must seize -- and this may be our last chance to seize it.

And if it seems too difficult or improbable, I ask you to think about the struggles and the challenges that past generations have overcome. Think about how World War II forced us to transform a peacetime economy still climbing out of Depression into an Arsenal of Democracy that could wage war across three continents. And when President Roosevelt's advisers informed him that his goals for wartime production were impossible to meet, he waved them off and said "believe me, the production people can do it if they really try." And they did.

Think about when the scientists and engineers told John F. Kennedy that they had no idea how to put a man on the moon, he told them they would find a way. And we found one.

Remember how we trained a generation for a new, industrial economy by building a nationwide system of public high schools; how we laid down railroad tracks and highways across an entire continent; how we pushed the boundaries of science and technology to unlock the very building blocks of human life.

I ask you to draw hope from the improbable progress this nation has made and look to the future with confidence that we too can meet the great test of our time. I ask you to join me, in November and in the years to come, to ensure that we will not only control our own energy, but once again control our own destiny, and forge a new and better future for the country that we love. Thank you.

A.2 Transcription du texte 2

Good morning. Before I begin today's announcement, I want to say a few words about the deepening economic crisis that we've inherited and the need for urgent action.

Over the last few days we've learned that Microsoft, Intel, United Airlines, Home Depot, Sprint Nextel, and Caterpillar are each cutting thousands of jobs. These are not just numbers on a page. As with the millions of jobs lost in 2008, these are working men and women whose families have been disrupted and whose dreams have been put on hold.

We owe it to each of them and to every, single American to act with a sense of urgency and common purpose. We can't afford distractions and we cannot afford delays. And that is why I look forward to signing an American Recovery and Reinvestment Plan that will put millions of Americans to work and lay the foundation for stable growth that our economy needs and that our people demand. These are extraordinary times and it calls for swift and extraordinary action.

At a time of such great challenge for America, no single issue is as fundamental to our future as energy. America's dependence on oil is one of the most serious threats that our nation has faced. It bankrolls dictators, pays for nuclear proliferation, and funds both sides of our struggle against terrorism. It puts the American people at the mercy of shifting gas

prices, stifles innovation and sets back our ability to compete.

These urgent dangers to our national and economic security are compounded by the long-term threat of climate change, which if left unchecked could result in violent conflict, terrible storms, shrinking coastlines and irreversible catastrophe. These are the facts and they are well known to the American people -- after all, there is nothing new about these warnings. Presidents have been sounding the alarm about energy dependence for decades. President Nixon promised to make our energy -- our nation energy independent by the end of the 1970s. When he spoke, we imported about a third of our oil; we now import more than half.

Year after year, decade after decade, we've chosen delay over decisive action. Rigid ideology has overruled sound science. Special interests have overshadowed common sense. Rhetoric has not led to the hard work needed to achieve results. Our leaders raise their voices each time there's a spike in gas prices, only to grow quiet when the price falls at the pump.

Now America has arrived at a crossroads. Embedded in American soil and the wind and the sun, we have the resources to change. Our scientists, businesses and workers have the capacity to move us forward. It falls on us to choose whether to risk the peril that comes with our current course or to seize the promise of energy independence. For the sake of our security, our economy and our planet, we must have the courage and commitment to change.

It will be the policy of my administration to reverse our dependence on foreign oil, while building a new energy economy that will create millions of jobs. We hold no illusion about the task that lies ahead. I cannot promise a quick fix; no single technology or set of regulations will get the job done. But we will commit ourselves to steady, focused, pragmatic pursuit of an America that is free from our energy dependence and empowered by a new energy economy that puts millions of our citizens to work.

Today, I'm announcing the first steps on our journey toward energy independence, as we develop new energy, set new fuel efficiency standards, and address greenhouse gas

emissions. Each step begins to move us in a new direction, while giving us the tools that we need to change.

First, we must take bold action to create a new American energy economy that creates millions of jobs for our people. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Plan before Congress places a down payment on this economy. It will put 460,000 Americans to work, with clean energy investments and double the capacity to generate alternative energy over the next three years. It will lay down 3,000 miles of transmission lines to deliver this energy to every corner of our country. It will save taxpayers \$2 billion a year by making 75 percent of federal buildings more efficient. And it will save working families hundreds of dollars on their energy bills by weatherizing 2 million homes.

This is the boost that our economy needs, and the new beginning that our future demands. By passing the bill, Congress can act where Washington has failed to act over and over again for 30 years. We need more than the same old empty promises. We need to show that this time it will be different. This is the time that Americans must come together on behalf of our common prosperity and security.

Second, we must ensure that the fuel-efficient cars of tomorrow are built right here in the United States of America. Increasing fuel efficiency in our cars and trucks is one of the most important steps that we can take to break our cycle of dependence on foreign oil. It will also help spark the innovation needed to ensure that our auto industry keeps pace with competitors around the world.

We will start by implementing new standards for model year 2011 so that we use less oil and families have access to cleaner, more efficient cars and trucks. This rule will be a down payment on a broader and sustained effort to reduce our dependence on foreign oil. Congress has passed legislation to increase standards to at least 35 miles per gallon by 2020. That 40 percent increase in fuel efficiency for our cars and trucks could save over 2 million barrels of oil every day -- nearly the entire amount of oil that we import from the Persian Gulf.

Going forward, my administration will work on a bipartisan basis in Washington and with industry partners across the country to forge a comprehensive approach that makes our economy stronger and our nation more secure.

Third, the federal government must work with, not against, states to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. California has shown bold and bipartisan leadership through its effort to forge 21st century standards, and over a dozen states have followed its lead. But instead of serving as a partner, Washington stood in their way. This refusal to lead risks the creation of a confusing and patchwork set of standards that hurts the environment and the auto industry.

The days of Washington dragging its heels are over. My administration will not deny facts, we will be guided by them. We cannot afford to pass the buck or push the burden onto the states. And that's why I'm directing the Environmental Protection Agency to immediately review the denial of the California waiver request and determine the best way forward. This will help us create incentives to develop new energy that will make us less dependent on oil that endangers our security, our economy, and our planet.

As we move forward, we will fully take into account the unique challenges facing the American auto industry and the taxpayer dollars that now support it. And let me be clear: Our goal is not to further burden an already struggling industry. It is to help America's automakers prepare for the future. This commitment must extend beyond the short-term assistance for businesses and workers. We must help them thrive by building the cars of tomorrow, and galvanizing a dynamic and viable industry for decades to come.

Finally, we will make it clear to the world that America is ready to lead. To protect our climate and our collective security, we must call together a truly global coalition. I've made it clear that we will act, but so too must the world. That's how we will deny leverage to dictators and dollars to terrorists. And that's how we will ensure that nations like China and India are doing their part, just as we are now willing to do ours.

It's time for America to lead, because this moment of peril must be turned into one of

progress. If we take action, we can create new industries and revive old ones; we can open new factories and power new farms; we can lower costs and revive our economy. We can do that, and we must do that. There's much work to be done. There is much further for us to go.

But I want to be clear from the beginning of this administration that we have made our choice. America will not be held hostage to dwindling resources, hostile regimes, and a warming planet. We will not be put off from action because action is hard. Now is the time to make the tough choices. Now is the time to meet the challenge at this crossroad of history by choosing a future that is safer for our country, prosperous for our planet, and sustainable.

Those are my priorities, and they're reflected in the executive orders that I'm about to sign. Thank you so much for being here.

A.3 Transcription du texte 3

Thank you very much. Please, have a seat. Thank you. Thank you, MIT. (Applause.) I am -- I am hugely honored to be here. It's always been a dream of mine to visit the most prestigious school in Cambridge, Massachusetts. (Applause.) Hold on a second -- certainly the most prestigious school in this part of Cambridge, Massachusetts. (Laughter.) And I'll probably be here for a while -- I understand a bunch of engineering students put my motorcade on top of Building 10. (Laughter.)

This tells you something about MIT -- everybody hands out periodic tables. (Laughter.) What's up with that? (Laughter.)

I want I want to thank all of you for the warm welcome and for the work all of you are doing to generate and test new ideas that hold so much promise for our economy and for our lives. And in particular, I want to thank two outstanding MIT professors, Eric Lander, a person you just heard from, Ernie Moniz, for their service on my council of advisors on science and technology. And they have been hugely helpful to us already on looking at, for example, how the federal government can most effectively respond to the threat of the H1N1 virus. So I'm very grateful to them.

We've got some other special guests here I just want to acknowledge very briefly. First of all, my great friend and a champion of science and technology here in the great Commonwealth of Massachusetts, my friend Deval Patrick is here. (Applause.) Our Lieutenant Governor Tim Murray is here. (Applause.) Attorney General Martha Coakley is here. (Applause.) Auditor of the Commonwealth, Joe DeNucci is here. (Applause.) The Mayor of the great City of Cambridge, Denise Simmons is in the house. (Applause.) The Mayor of Boston, Tom Menino, is not here, but he met me at the airport and he is doing great; he sends best wishes.

Somebody who really has been an all-star in Capitol Hill over the last 20 years, but certainly over the last year, on a whole range of issues -- everything from Afghanistan to clean energy -- a great friend, John Kerry. Please give John Kerry a round of applause. (Applause.)

And a wonderful member of Congress -- I believe this is your district, is that correct, Mike? Mike Capuano. Please give Mike a big round of applause. (Applause.)

Now, Dr. Moniz is also the Director of MIT's Energy Initiative, called MITEI. And he and President Hockfield just showed me some of the extraordinary energy research being conducted at this institute: windows that generate electricity by directing light to solar cells; light-weight, high-power batteries that aren't built, but are grown -- that was neat stuff; engineering viruses to create -- to create batteries; more efficient lighting systems that rely on nanotechnology; innovative engineering that will make it possible for offshore wind power plants to deliver electricity even when the air is still.

And it's a reminder that all of you are heirs to a legacy of innovation -- not just here but across America -- that has improved our health and our wellbeing and helped us achieve unparalleled prosperity. I was telling John and Deval on the ride over here, you just get excited being here and seeing these extraordinary young people and the extraordinary leadership of Professor Hockfield because it taps into something essential about America --

it's the legacy of daring men and women who put their talents and their efforts into the pursuit of discovery. And it's the legacy of a nation that supported those intrepid few willing to take risks on an idea that might fail -- but might also change the world.

Even in the darkest of times this nation has seen, it has always sought a brighter horizon. Think about it. In the middle of the Civil War, President Lincoln designated a system of land grant colleges, including MIT, which helped open the doors of higher education to millions of people. A year -- a full year before the end of World War II, President Roosevelt signed the GI Bill which helped unleash a wave of strong and broadly shared economic growth. And after the Soviet launch of Sputnik, the first artificial satellite to orbit the Earth, the United States went about winning the Space Race by investing in science and technology, leading not only to small steps on the moon but also to tremendous economic benefits here on Earth.

So the truth is, we have always been about innovation, we have always been about discovery. That's in our DNA. The truth is we also face more complex challenges than generations past. A medical system that holds the promise of unlocking new cures is attached to a health care system that has the potential to bankrupt families and businesses and our government. A global marketplace that links the trader on Wall Street to the homeowner on Main Street to the factory worker in China -- an economy in which we all share opportunity is also an economy in which we all share crisis. We face threats to our security that seek -- there are threats to our security that are based on those who would seek to exploit the very interconnectedness and openness that's so essential to our prosperity. The system of energy that powers our economy also undermines our security and endangers our planet.

Now, while the challenges today are different, we have to draw on the same spirit of innovation that's always been central to our success. And that's especially true when it comes to energy. There may be plenty of room for debate as to how we transition from fossil fuels to renewable fuels -- we all understand there's no silver bullet to do it. There's going to be a lot of debate about how we move from an economy that's importing oil to one that's exporting clean energy technology; how we harness the innovative potential on display here at MIT to

create millions of new jobs; and how we will lead the world to prevent the worst consequences of climate change. There are going to be all sorts of debates, both in the laboratory and on Capitol Hill. But there's no question that we must do all these things.

Countries on every corner of this Earth now recognize that energy supplies are growing scarcer, energy demands are growing larger, and rising energy use imperils the planet we will leave to future generations. And that's why the world is now engaged in a peaceful competition to determine the technologies that will power the 21st century. From China to India, from Japan to Germany, nations everywhere are racing to develop new ways to producing and use energy. The nation that wins this competition will be the nation that leads the global economy. I am convinced of that. And I want America to be that nation. It's that simple. (Applause.)

That's why the Recovery Act that we passed back in January makes the largest investment in clean energy in history, not just to help end this recession, but to lay a new foundation for lasting prosperity. The Recovery Act includes \$80 billion to put tens of thousands of Americans to work developing new battery technologies for hybrid vehicles; modernizing the electric grid; making our homes and businesses more energy efficient; doubling our capacity to generate renewable electricity. These are creating private-sector jobs weatherizing homes; manufacturing cars and trucks; upgrading to smart electric meters; installing solar panels; assembling wind turbines; building new facilities and factories and laboratories all across America. And, by the way, helping to finance extraordinary research.

In fact, in just a few weeks, right here in Boston, workers will break ground on a new Wind Technology Testing Center, a project made possible through a \$25 million Recovery Act investment as well as through the support of Massachusetts and its partners. And I want everybody to understand -- Governor Patrick's leadership and vision made this happen. He was bragging about Massachusetts on the way over here -- I told him, you don't have to be a booster, I already love the state. (Applause.) But he helped make this happen.

Hundreds of people will be put to work building this new testing facility, but the benefits

will extend far beyond these jobs. For the first time, researchers in the United States will be able to test the world's newest and largest wind turbine blades -- blades roughly the length of a football field -- and that in turn will make it possible for American businesses to develop more efficient and effective turbines, and to lead a market estimated at more than \$2 trillion over the next two decades.

This grant follows other Recovery Act investments right here in Massachusetts that will help create clean energy jobs in this commonwealth and across the country. And this only builds on the work of your governor, who has endeavored to make Massachusetts a clean energy leader -- from increasing the supply of renewable electricity, to quadrupling solar capacity, to tripling the commonwealth's investment in energy efficiency, all of which helps to draw new jobs and new industries. (Applause.) That's worth applause.

Now, even as we're investing in technologies that exist today, we're also investing in the science that will produce the technologies of tomorrow. The Recovery Act provides the largest single boost in scientific research in history. Let me repeat that: The Recovery Act, the stimulus bill represents the largest single boost in scientific research in history. (Applause.) An increase -- that's an increase in funding that's already making a difference right here on this campus. And my budget also makes the research and experimentation tax credit permanent -- a tax credit that spurs innovation and jobs, adding \$2 to the economy for every dollar that it costs.

And all of this must culminate in the passage of comprehensive legislation that will finally make renewable energy the profitable kind of energy in America. John Kerry is working on this legislation right now, and he's doing a terrific job reaching out across the other side of the aisle because this should not be a partisan issue. Everybody in America should have a stake -- (applause) -- everybody in America should have a stake in legislation that can transform our energy system into one that's far more efficient, far cleaner, and provide energy independence for America -- making the best use of resources we have in abundance, everything from figuring out how to use the fossil fuels that inevitably we are going to be using for several decades, things like coal and oil and natural gas; figuring out

how we use those as cleanly and efficiently as possible; creating safe nuclear power; sustainable -- sustainably grown biofuels; and then the energy that we can harness from wind and the waves and the sun. It is a transformation that will be made as swiftly and as carefully as possible, to ensure that we are doing what it takes to grow this economy in the short, medium, and long term. And I do believe that a consensus is growing to achieve exactly that.

The Pentagon has declared our dependence on fossil fuels a security threat. Veterans from Iraq and Afghanistan are traveling the country as part of Operation Free, campaigning to end our dependence on oil -- (applause) -- we have a few of these folks here today, right there. (Applause.) The young people of this country -- that I've met all across America -- they understand that this is the challenge of their generation.

Leaders in the business community are standing with leaders in the environmental community to protect the economy and the planet we leave for our children. The House of Representatives has already passed historic legislation, due in large part to the efforts of Massachusetts' own Ed Markey, he deserves a big round of applause. (Applause.) We're now seeing prominent Republicans like Senator Lindsey Graham joining forces with long-time leaders John Kerry on this issue, to swiftly pass a bill through the Senate as well. In fact, the Energy Committee, thanks to the work of its Chair, Senator Jeff Bingaman, has already passed key provisions of comprehensive legislation.

So we are seeing a convergence. The naysayers, the folks who would pretend that this is not an issue, they are being marginalized. But I think it's important to understand that the closer we get, the harder the opposition will fight and the more we'll hear from those whose interest or ideology run counter to the much needed action that we're engaged in. There are those who will suggest that moving toward clean energy will destroy our economy -- when it's the system we currently have that endangers our prosperity and prevents us from creating millions of new jobs. There are going to be those who cynically claim -- make cynical claims that contradict the overwhelming scientific evidence when it comes to climate change, claims whose only purpose is to defeat or delay the change that we know is necessary.

So we're going to have to work on those folks. But understand there's also another myth that we have to dispel, and this one is far more dangerous because we're all somewhat complicit in it. It's far more dangerous than any attack made by those who wish to stand in the way progress -- and that's the idea that there is nothing or little that we can do. It's pessimism. It's the pessimistic notion that our politics are too broken and our people too unwilling to make hard choices for us to actually deal with this energy issue that we're facing. And implicit in this argument is the sense that somehow we've lost something important -- that fighting American spirit, that willingness to tackle hard challenges, that determination to see those challenges to the end, that we can solve problems, that we can act collectively, that somehow that is something of the past.

I reject that argument. I reject it because of what I've seen here at MIT. Because of what I have seen across America. Because of what we know we are capable of achieving when called upon to achieve it. This is the nation that harnessed electricity and the energy contained in the atom, that developed the steamboat and the modern solar cell. This is the nation that pushed westward and looked skyward. We have always sought out new frontiers and this generation is no different.

Today's frontiers can't be found on a map. They're being explored in our classrooms and our laboratories, in our start-ups and our factories. And today's pioneers are not traveling to some far flung place. These pioneers are all around us -- the entrepreneurs and the inventors, the researchers, the engineers -- helping to lead us into the future, just as they have in the past. This is the nation that has led the world for two centuries in the pursuit of discovery. This is the nation that will lead the clean energy economy of tomorrow, so long as all of us remember what we have achieved in the past and we use that to inspire us to achieve even more in the future.

I am confident that's what's happening right here at this extraordinary institution. And if you will join us in what is sure to be a difficult fight in the months and years ahead, I am confident that all of America is going to be pulling in one direction to make sure that we are the energy leader that we need to be.

Thank you very much, everybody. God bless you. God bless the United States of America. (Applause.)

A.4 Transcription du texte 4

Madam Speaker, Vice President Biden, members of Congress, distinguished guests, and fellow Americans:

Our Constitution declares that from time to time, the President shall give to Congress information about the state of our union. For 220 years, our leaders have fulfilled this duty. They've done so during periods of prosperity and tranquility. And they've done so in the midst of war and depression; at moments of great strife and great struggle.

It's tempting to look back on these moments and assume that our progress was inevitable — that America was always destined to succeed. But when the Union was turned back at Bull Run, and the Allies first landed at Omaha Beach, victory was very much in doubt. When the market crashed on Black Tuesday, and civil rights marchers were beaten on Bloody Sunday, the future was anything but certain. These were the times that tested the courage of our convictions, and the strength of our union. And despite all our divisions and disagreements, our hesitations and our fears, America prevailed because we chose to move forward as one nation, as one people.

Again, we are tested. And again, we must answer history's call.

One year ago, I took office amid two wars, an economy rocked by a severe recession, a financial system on the verge of collapse, and a government deeply in debt. Experts from across the political spectrum warned that if we did not act, we might face a second depression. So we acted — immediately and aggressively. And one year later, the worst of the storm has passed.

But the devastation remains. One in 10 Americans still cannot find work. Many

businesses have shuttered. Home values have declined. Small towns and rural communities have been hit especially hard. And for those who'd already known poverty, life has become that much harder.

This recession has also compounded the burdens that America's families have been dealing with for decades — the burden of working harder and longer for less; of being unable to save enough to retire or help kids with college.

So I know the anxieties that are out there right now. They're not new. These struggles are the reason I ran for President. These struggles are what I've witnessed for years in places like Elkhart, Indiana; Galesburg, Illinois. I hear about them in the letters that I read each night. The toughest to read are those written by children — asking why they have to move from their home, asking when their mom or dad will be able to go back to work.

For these Americans and so many others, change has not come fast enough. Some are frustrated; some are angry. They don't understand why it seems like bad behavior on Wall Street is rewarded, but hard work on Main Street isn't; or why Washington has been unable or unwilling to solve any of our problems. They're tired of the partisanship and the shouting and the pettiness. They know we can't afford it. Not now.

So we face big and difficult challenges. And what the American people hope — what they deserve — is for all of us, Democrats and Republicans, to work through our differences; to overcome the numbing weight of our politics. For while the people who sent us here have different backgrounds, different stories, different beliefs, the anxieties they face are the same. The aspirations they hold are shared: a job that pays the bills; a chance to get ahead; most of all, the ability to give their children a better life.

You know what else they share? They share a stubborn resilience in the face of adversity. After one of the most difficult years in our history, they remain busy building cars and teaching kids, starting businesses and going back to school. They're coaching Little League and helping their neighbors. One woman wrote to me and said, "We are strained but

hopeful, struggling but encouraged."

It's because of this spirit — this great decency and great strength — that I have never been more hopeful about America's future than I am tonight. (Applause.) Despite our hardships, our union is strong. We do not give up. We do not quit. We do not allow fear or division to break our spirit. In this new decade, it's time the American people get a government that matches their decency; that embodies their strength. (Applause.)

And tonight, tonight I'd like to talk about how together we can deliver on that promise.

It begins with our economy.

Our most urgent task upon taking office was to shore up the same banks that helped cause this crisis. It was not easy to do. And if there's one thing that has unified Democrats and Republicans, and everybody in between, it's that we all hated the bank bailout. I hated it -- (applause.) I hated it. You hated it. It was about as popular as a root canal. (Laughter.)

But when I ran for President, I promised I wouldn't just do what was popular — I would do what was necessary. And if we had allowed the meltdown of the financial system, unemployment might be double what it is today. More businesses would certainly have closed. More homes would have surely been lost.

So I supported the last administration's efforts to create the financial rescue program. And when we took that program over, we made it more transparent and more accountable. And as a result, the markets are now stabilized, and we've recovered most of the money we spent on the banks. (Applause.) Most but not all.

To recover the rest, I've proposed a fee on the biggest banks. (Applause.) Now, I know Wall Street isn't keen on this idea. But if these firms can afford to hand out big bonuses again, they can afford a modest fee to pay back the taxpayers who rescued them in their time of need. (Applause.)

Now, as we stabilized the financial system, we also took steps to get our economy growing again, save as many jobs as possible, and help Americans who had become unemployed.

That's why we extended or increased unemployment benefits for more than 18 million Americans; made health insurance 65 percent cheaper for families who get their coverage through COBRA; and passed 25 different tax cuts.

Now, let me repeat: We cut taxes. We cut taxes for 95 percent of working families. (Applause.) We cut taxes for small businesses. We cut taxes for first-time homebuyers. We cut taxes for parents trying to care for their children. We cut taxes for 8 million Americans paying for college. (Applause.)

I thought I'd get some applause on that one. (Laughter and applause.)

As a result, millions of Americans had more to spend on gas and food and other necessities, all of which helped businesses keep more workers. And we haven't raised income taxes by a single dime on a single person. Not a single dime. (Applause.)

Because of the steps we took, there are about two million Americans working right now who would otherwise be unemployed. (Applause.) Two hundred thousand work in construction and clean energy; 300,000 are teachers and other education workers. Tens of thousands are cops, firefighters, correctional officers, first responders. (Applause.) And we're on track to add another one and a half million jobs to this total by the end of the year.

The plan that has made all of this possible, from the tax cuts to the jobs, is the Recovery Act. (Applause.) That's right — the Recovery Act, also known as the stimulus bill. (Applause.) Economists on the left and the right say this bill has helped save jobs and avert disaster. But you don't have to take their word for it. Talk to the small business in Phoenix that will triple its workforce because of the Recovery Act. Talk to the window manufacturer in Philadelphia who said he used to be skeptical about the Recovery Act, until he had to add

two more work shifts just because of the business it created. Talk to the single teacher raising two kids who was told by her principal in the last week of school that because of the Recovery Act, she wouldn't be laid off after all.

There are stories like this all across America. And after two years of recession, the economy is growing again. Retirement funds have started to gain back some of their value. Businesses are beginning to invest again, and slowly some are starting to hire again.

But I realize that for every success story, there are other stories, of men and women who wake up with the anguish of not knowing where their next paycheck will come from; who send out resumes week after week and hear nothing in response. That is why jobs must be our number-one focus in 2010, and that's why I'm calling for a new jobs bill tonight. (Applause.)

Now, the true engine of job creation in this country will always be America's businesses. (Applause.) But government can create the conditions necessary for businesses to expand and hire more workers.

We should start where most new jobs do — in small businesses, companies that begin when -- (applause) -- companies that begin when an entrepreneur -- when an entrepreneur takes a chance on a dream, or a worker decides it's time she became her own boss. Through sheer grit and determination, these companies have weathered the recession and they're ready to grow. But when you talk to small businessowners in places like Allentown, Pennsylvania, or Elyria, Ohio, you find out that even though banks on Wall Street are lending again, they're mostly lending to bigger companies. Financing remains difficult for small businessowners across the country, even those that are making a profit.

So tonight, I'm proposing that we take \$30 billion of the money Wall Street banks have repaid and use it to help community banks give small businesses the credit they need to stay afloat. (Applause.) I'm also proposing a new small business tax credit — one that will go to over one million small businesses who hire new workers or raise wages. (Applause.) While

we're at it, let's also eliminate all capital gains taxes on small business investment, and provide a tax incentive for all large businesses and all small businesses to invest in new plants and equipment. (Applause.)

Next, we can put Americans to work today building the infrastructure of tomorrow. (Applause.) From the first railroads to the Interstate Highway System, our nation has always been built to compete. There's no reason Europe or China should have the fastest trains, or the new factories that manufacture clean energy products.

Tomorrow, I'll visit Tampa, Florida, where workers will soon break ground on a new high-speed railroad funded by the Recovery Act. (Applause.) There are projects like that all across this country that will create jobs and help move our nation's goods, services, and information. (Applause.)

We should put more Americans to work building clean energy facilities -- (applause) -- and give rebates to Americans who make their homes more energy-efficient, which supports clean energy jobs. (Applause.) And to encourage these and other businesses to stay within our borders, it is time to finally slash the tax breaks for companies that ship our jobs overseas, and give those tax breaks to companies that create jobs right here in the United States of America. (Applause.)

Now, the House has passed a jobs bill that includes some of these steps. (Applause.) As the first order of business this year, I urge the Senate to do the same, and I know they will. (Applause.) They will. (Applause.) People are out of work. They're hurting. They need our help. And I want a jobs bill on my desk without delay. (Applause.)

But the truth is, these steps won't make up for the seven million jobs that we've lost over the last two years. The only way to move to full employment is to lay a new foundation for long-term economic growth, and finally address the problems that America's families have confronted for years.

We can't afford another so-called economic "expansion" like the one from the last decade — what some call the "lost decade" — where jobs grew more slowly than during any prior expansion; where the income of the average American household declined while the cost of health care and tuition reached record highs; where prosperity was built on a housing bubble and financial speculation.

From the day I took office, I've been told that addressing our larger challenges is too ambitious; such an effort would be too contentious. I've been told that our political system is too gridlocked, and that we should just put things on hold for a while.

For those who make these claims, I have one simple question: How long should we wait? How long should America put its future on hold? (Applause.)

You see, Washington has been telling us to wait for decades, even as the problems have grown worse. Meanwhile, China is not waiting to revamp its economy. Germany is not waiting. India is not waiting. These nations -- they're not standing still. These nations aren't playing for second place. They're putting more emphasis on math and science. They're rebuilding their infrastructure. They're making serious investments in clean energy because they want those jobs. Well, I do not accept second place for the United States of America. (Applause.)

As hard as it may be, as uncomfortable and contentious as the debates may become, it's time to get serious about fixing the problems that are hampering our growth.

Now, one place to start is serious financial reform. Look, I am not interested in punishing banks. I'm interested in protecting our economy. A strong, healthy financial market makes it possible for businesses to access credit and create new jobs. It channels the savings of families into investments that raise incomes. But that can only happen if we guard against the same recklessness that nearly brought down our entire economy.

We need to make sure consumers and middle-class families have the information they

need to make financial decisions. (Applause.) We can't allow financial institutions, including those that take your deposits, to take risks that threaten the whole economy.

Now, the House has already passed financial reform with many of these changes. (Applause.) And the lobbyists are trying to kill it. But we cannot let them win this fight. (Applause.) And if the bill that ends up on my desk does not meet the test of real reform, I will send it back until we get it right. We've got to get it right. (Applause.)

Next, we need to encourage American innovation. Last year, we made the largest investment in basic research funding in history — (applause) -- an investment that could lead to the world's cheapest solar cells or treatment that kills cancer cells but leaves healthy ones untouched. And no area is more ripe for such innovation than energy. You can see the results of last year's investments in clean energy — in the North Carolina company that will create 1,200 jobs nationwide helping to make advanced batteries; or in the California business that will put a thousand people to work making solar panels.

But to create more of these clean energy jobs, we need more production, more efficiency, more incentives. And that means building a new generation of safe, clean nuclear power plants in this country. (Applause.) It means making tough decisions about opening new offshore areas for oil and gas development. (Applause.) It means continued investment in advanced biofuels and clean coal technologies. (Applause.) And, yes, it means passing a comprehensive energy and climate bill with incentives that will finally make clean energy the profitable kind of energy in America. (Applause.)

I am grateful to the House for passing such a bill last year. (Applause.) And this year I'm eager to help advance the bipartisan effort in the Senate. (Applause.)

I know there have been questions about whether we can afford such changes in a tough economy. I know that there are those who disagree with the overwhelming scientific evidence on climate change. But here's the thing -- even if you doubt the evidence, providing incentives for energy-efficiency and clean energy are the right thing to do for our future —

because the nation that leads the clean energy economy will be the nation that leads the global economy. And America must be that nation. (Applause.)

Third, we need to export more of our goods. (Applause.) Because the more products we make and sell to other countries, the more jobs we support right here in America. (Applause.) So tonight, we set a new goal: We will double our exports over the next five years, an increase that will support two million jobs in America. (Applause.) To help meet this goal, we're launching a National Export Initiative that will help farmers and small businesses increase their exports, and reform export controls consistent with national security. (Applause.)

We have to seek new markets aggressively, just as our competitors are. If America sits on the sidelines while other nations sign trade deals, we will lose the chance to create jobs on our shores. (Applause.) But realizing those benefits also means enforcing those agreements so our trading partners play by the rules. (Applause.) And that's why we'll continue to shape a Doha trade agreement that opens global markets, and why we will strengthen our trade relations in Asia and with key partners like South Korea and Panama and Colombia. (Applause.)

Fourth, we need to invest in the skills and education of our people. (Applause.)

Now, this year, we've broken through the stalemate between left and right by launching a national competition to improve our schools. And the idea here is simple: Instead of rewarding failure, we only reward success. Instead of funding the status quo, we only invest in reform -- reform that raises student achievement; inspires students to excel in math and science; and turns around failing schools that steal the future of too many young Americans, from rural communities to the inner city. In the 21st century, the best anti-poverty program around is a world-class education. (Applause.) And in this country, the success of our children cannot depend more on where they live than on their potential.

When we renew the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, we will work with

Congress to expand these reforms to all 50 states. Still, in this economy, a high school diploma no longer guarantees a good job. That's why I urge the Senate to follow the House and pass a bill that will revitalize our community colleges, which are a career pathway to the children of so many working families. (Applause.)

To make college more affordable, this bill will finally end the unwarranted taxpayer subsidies that go to banks for student loans. (Applause.) Instead, let's take that money and give families a \$10,000 tax credit for four years of college and increase Pell Grants. (Applause.) And let's tell another one million students that when they graduate, they will be required to pay only 10 percent of their income on student loans, and all of their debt will be forgiven after 20 years — and forgiven after 10 years if they choose a career in public service, because in the United States of America, no one should go broke because they chose to go to college. (Applause.)

And by the way, it's time for colleges and universities to get serious about cutting their own costs — (applause) -- because they, too, have a responsibility to help solve this problem.

Now, the price of college tuition is just one of the burdens facing the middle class. That's why last year I asked Vice President Biden to chair a task force on middle-class families. That's why we're nearly doubling the child care tax credit, and making it easier to save for retirement by giving access to every worker a retirement account and expanding the tax credit for those who start a nest egg. That's why we're working to lift the value of a family's single largest investment — their home. The steps we took last year to shore up the housing market have allowed millions of Americans to take out new loans and save an average of \$1,500 on mortgage payments.

This year, we will step up refinancing so that homeowners can move into more affordable mortgages. (Applause.) And it is precisely to relieve the burden on middle-class families that we still need health insurance reform. (Applause.) Yes, we do. (Applause.)

Now, let's clear a few things up. (Laughter.) I didn't choose to tackle this issue to get

some legislative victory under my belt. And by now it should be fairly obvious that I didn't take on health care because it was good politics. (Laughter.) I took on health care because of the stories I've heard from Americans with preexisting conditions whose lives depend on getting coverage; patients who've been denied coverage; families — even those with insurance — who are just one illness away from financial ruin.

After nearly a century of trying -- Democratic administrations, Republican administrations -- we are closer than ever to bringing more security to the lives of so many Americans. The approach we've taken would protect every American from the worst practices of the insurance industry. It would give small businesses and uninsured Americans a chance to choose an affordable health care plan in a competitive market. It would require every insurance plan to cover preventive care.

And by the way, I want to acknowledge our First Lady, Michelle Obama, who this year is creating a national movement to tackle the epidemic of childhood obesity and make kids healthier. (Applause.) Thank you. She gets embarrassed. (Laughter.)

Our approach would preserve the right of Americans who have insurance to keep their doctor and their plan. It would reduce costs and premiums for millions of families and businesses. And according to the Congressional Budget Office — the independent organization that both parties have cited as the official scorekeeper for Congress — our approach would bring down the deficit by as much as \$1 trillion over the next two decades. (Applause.)

Still, this is a complex issue, and the longer it was debated, the more skeptical people became. I take my share of the blame for not explaining it more clearly to the American people. And I know that with all the lobbying and horse-trading, the process left most Americans wondering, "What's in it for me?"

But I also know this problem is not going away. By the time I'm finished speaking tonight, more Americans will have lost their health insurance. Millions will lose it this year.

Our deficit will grow. Premiums will go up. Patients will be denied the care they need. Small business owners will continue to drop coverage altogether. I will not walk away from these Americans, and neither should the people in this chamber. (Applause.)

So, as temperatures cool, I want everyone to take another look at the plan we've proposed. There's a reason why many doctors, nurses, and health care experts who know our system best consider this approach a vast improvement over the status quo. But if anyone from either party has a better approach that will bring down premiums, bring down the deficit, cover the uninsured, strengthen Medicare for seniors, and stop insurance company abuses, let me know. (Applause.) Let me know. Let me know. (Applause.) I'm eager to see it.

Here's what I ask Congress, though: Don't walk away from reform. Not now. Not when we are so close. Let us find a way to come together and finish the job for the American people. (Applause.) Let's get it done. Let's get it done. (Applause.)

Now, even as health care reform would reduce our deficit, it's not enough to dig us out of a massive fiscal hole in which we find ourselves. It's a challenge that makes all others that much harder to solve, and one that's been subject to a lot of political posturing. So let me start the discussion of government spending by setting the record straight.

At the beginning of the last decade, the year 2000, America had a budget surplus of over \$200 billion. (Applause.) By the time I took office, we had a one-year deficit of over \$1 trillion and projected deficits of \$8 trillion over the next decade. Most of this was the result of not paying for two wars, two tax cuts, and an expensive prescription drug program. On top of that, the effects of the recession put a \$3 trillion hole in our budget. All this was before I walked in the door. (Laughter and applause.)

Now -- just stating the facts. Now, if we had taken office in ordinary times, I would have liked nothing more than to start bringing down the deficit. But we took office amid a crisis. And our efforts to prevent a second depression have added another \$1 trillion to our

national debt. That, too, is a fact.

I'm absolutely convinced that was the right thing to do. But families across the country are tightening their belts and making tough decisions. The federal government should do the same. (Applause.) So tonight, I'm proposing specific steps to pay for the trillion dollars that it took to rescue the economy last year.

Starting in 2011, we are prepared to freeze government spending for three years. (Applause.) Spending related to our national security, Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security will not be affected. But all other discretionary government programs will. Like any cash-strapped family, we will work within a budget to invest in what we need and sacrifice what we don't. And if I have to enforce this discipline by veto, I will. (Applause.)

We will continue to go through the budget, line by line, page by page, to eliminate programs that we can't afford and don't work. We've already identified \$20 billion in savings for next year. To help working families, we'll extend our middle-class tax cuts. But at a time of record deficits, we will not continue tax cuts for oil companies, for investment fund managers, and for those making over \$250,000 a year. We just can't afford it. (Applause.)

Now, even after paying for what we spent on my watch, we'll still face the massive deficit we had when I took office. More importantly, the cost of Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security will continue to skyrocket. That's why I've called for a bipartisan fiscal commission, modeled on a proposal by Republican Judd Gregg and Democrat Kent Conrad. (Applause.) This can't be one of those Washington gimmicks that lets us pretend we solved a problem. The commission will have to provide a specific set of solutions by a certain deadline.

Now, yesterday, the Senate blocked a bill that would have created this commission. So I'll issue an executive order that will allow us to go forward, because I refuse to pass this problem on to another generation of Americans. (Applause.) And when the vote comes tomorrow, the Senate should restore the pay-as-you-go law that was a big reason for why we

had record surpluses in the 1990s. (Applause.)

Now, I know that some in my own party will argue that we can't address the deficit or freeze government spending when so many are still hurting. And I agree -- which is why this freeze won't take effect until next year -- (laughter) -- when the economy is stronger. That's how budgeting works. (Laughter and applause.) But understand -- understand if we don't take meaningful steps to rein in our debt, it could damage our markets, increase the cost of borrowing, and jeopardize our recovery -- all of which would have an even worse effect on our job growth and family incomes.

From some on the right, I expect we'll hear a different argument -- that if we just make fewer investments in our people, extend tax cuts including those for the wealthier Americans, eliminate more regulations, maintain the status quo on health care, our deficits will go away. The problem is that's what we did for eight years. (Applause.) That's what helped us into this crisis. It's what helped lead to these deficits. We can't do it again.

Rather than fight the same tired battles that have dominated Washington for decades, it's time to try something new. Let's invest in our people without leaving them a mountain of debt. Let's meet our responsibility to the citizens who sent us here. Let's try common sense. (Laughter.) A novel concept.

To do that, we have to recognize that we face more than a deficit of dollars right now. We face a deficit of trust -- deep and corrosive doubts about how Washington works that have been growing for years. To close that credibility gap we have to take action on both ends of Pennsylvania Avenue -- to end the outsized influence of lobbyists; to do our work openly; to give our people the government they deserve. (Applause.)

That's what I came to Washington to do. That's why -- for the first time in history -- my administration posts on our White House visitors online. That's why we've excluded lobbyists from policymaking jobs, or seats on federal boards and commissions.

But we can't stop there. It's time to require lobbyists to disclose each contact they make on behalf of a client with my administration or with Congress. It's time to put strict limits on the contributions that lobbyists give to candidates for federal office.

With all due deference to separation of powers, last week the Supreme Court reversed a century of law that I believe will open the floodgates for special interests — including foreign corporations — to spend without limit in our elections. (Applause.) I don't think American elections should be bankrolled by America's most powerful interests, or worse, by foreign entities. (Applause.) They should be decided by the American people. And I'd urge Democrats and Republicans to pass a bill that helps to correct some of these problems.

I'm also calling on Congress to continue down the path of earmark reform. Applause.) Democrats and Republicans. (Applause.) Democrats and Republicans. You've trimmed some of this spending, you've embraced some meaningful change. But restoring the public trust demands more. For example, some members of Congress post some earmark requests online. (Applause.) Tonight, I'm calling on Congress to publish all earmark requests on a single Web site before there's a vote, so that the American people can see how their money is being spent. (Applause.)

Of course, none of these reforms will even happen if we don't also reform how we work with one another. Now, I'm not naïve. I never thought that the mere fact of my election would usher in peace and harmony -- (laughter) -- and some post-partisan era. I knew that both parties have fed divisions that are deeply entrenched. And on some issues, there are simply philosophical differences that will always cause us to part ways. These disagreements, about the role of government in our lives, about our national priorities and our national security, they've been taking place for over 200 years. They're the very essence of our democracy.

But what frustrates the American people is a Washington where every day is Election Day. We can't wage a perpetual campaign where the only goal is to see who can get the most embarrassing headlines about the other side — a belief that if you lose, I win. Neither party

should delay or obstruct every single bill just because they can. The confirmation of -- (applause) -- I'm speaking to both parties now. The confirmation of well-qualified public servants shouldn't be held hostage to the pet projects or grudges of a few individual senators. (Applause.)

Washington may think that saying anything about the other side, no matter how false, no matter how malicious, is just part of the game. But it's precisely such politics that has stopped either party from helping the American people. Worse yet, it's sowing further division among our citizens, further distrust in our government.

So, no, I will not give up on trying to change the tone of our politics. I know it's an election year. And after last week, it's clear that campaign fever has come even earlier than usual. But we still need to govern.

To Democrats, I would remind you that we still have the largest majority in decades, and the people expect us to solve problems, not run for the hills. (Applause.) And if the Republican leadership is going to insist that 60 votes in the Senate are required to do any business at all in this town -- a supermajority -- then the responsibility to govern is now yours as well. (Applause.) Just saying no to everything may be good short-term politics, but it's not leadership. We were sent here to serve our citizens, not our ambitions. (Applause.) So let's show the American people that we can do it together. (Applause.)

This week, I'll be addressing a meeting of the House Republicans. I'd like to begin monthly meetings with both Democratic and Republican leadership. I know you can't wait. (Laughter.)

Throughout our history, no issue has united this country more than our security. Sadly, some of the unity we felt after 9/11 has dissipated. We can argue all we want about who's to blame for this, but I'm not interested in re-litigating the past. I know that all of us love this country. All of us are committed to its defense. So let's put aside the schoolyard taunts about who's tough. Let's reject the false choice between protecting our people and upholding our

values. Let's leave behind the fear and division, and do what it takes to defend our nation and forge a more hopeful future -- for America and for the world. (Applause.)

That's the work we began last year. Since the day I took office, we've renewed our focus on the terrorists who threaten our nation. We've made substantial investments in our homeland security and disrupted plots that threatened to take American lives. We are filling unacceptable gaps revealed by the failed Christmas attack, with better airline security and swifter action on our intelligence. We've prohibited torture and strengthened partnerships from the Pacific to South Asia to the Arabian Peninsula. And in the last year, hundreds of al Qaeda's fighters and affiliates, including many senior leaders, have been captured or killed -- far more than in 2008.

And in Afghanistan, we're increasing our troops and training Afghan security forces so they can begin to take the lead in July of 2011, and our troops can begin to come home. (Applause.) We will reward good governance, work to reduce corruption, and support the rights of all Afghans -- men and women alike. (Applause.) We're joined by allies and partners who have increased their own commitments, and who will come together tomorrow in London to reaffirm our common purpose. There will be difficult days ahead. But I am absolutely confident we will succeed.

As we take the fight to al Qaeda, we are responsibly leaving Iraq to its people. As a candidate, I promised that I would end this war, and that is what I am doing as President. We will have all of our combat troops out of Iraq by the end of this August. (Applause.) We will support the Iraqi government -- we will support the Iraqi government as they hold elections, and we will continue to partner with the Iraqi people to promote regional peace and prosperity. But make no mistake: This war is ending, and all of our troops are coming home. (Applause.)

Tonight, all of our men and women in uniform -- in Iraq, in Afghanistan, and around the world -- they have to know that we -- that they have our respect, our gratitude, our full support. And just as they must have the resources they need in war, we all have a

responsibility to support them when they come home. (Applause.) That's why we made the largest increase in investments for veterans in decades -- last year. (Applause.) That's why we're building a 21st century VA. And that's why Michelle has joined with Jill Biden to forge a national commitment to support military families. (Applause.)

Now, even as we prosecute two wars, we're also confronting perhaps the greatest danger to the American people — the threat of nuclear weapons. I've embraced the vision of John F. Kennedy and Ronald Reagan through a strategy that reverses the spread of these weapons and seeks a world without them. To reduce our stockpiles and launchers, while ensuring our deterrent, the United States and Russia are completing negotiations on the farthest-reaching arms control treaty in nearly two decades. (Applause.) And at April's Nuclear Security Summit, we will bring 44 nations together here in Washington, D.C. behind a clear goal: securing all vulnerable nuclear materials around the world in four years, so that they never fall into the hands of terrorists. (Applause.)

Now, these diplomatic efforts have also strengthened our hand in dealing with those nations that insist on violating international agreements in pursuit of nuclear weapons. That's why North Korea now faces increased isolation, and stronger sanctions — sanctions that are being vigorously enforced. That's why the international community is more united, and the Islamic Republic of Iran is more isolated. And as Iran's leaders continue to ignore their obligations, there should be no doubt: They, too, will face growing consequences. That is a promise. (Applause.)

That's the leadership that we are providing — engagement that advances the common security and prosperity of all people. We're working through the G20 to sustain a lasting global recovery. We're working with Muslim communities around the world to promote science and education and innovation. We have gone from a bystander to a leader in the fight against climate change. We're helping developing countries to feed themselves, and continuing the fight against HIV/AIDS. And we are launching a new initiative that will give us the capacity to respond faster and more effectively to bioterrorism or an infectious disease — a plan that will counter threats at home and strengthen public health abroad.

As we have for over 60 years, America takes these actions because our destiny is connected to those beyond our shores. But we also do it because it is right. That's why, as we meet here tonight, over 10,000 Americans are working with many nations to help the people of Haiti recover and rebuild. (Applause.) That's why we stand with the girl who yearns to go to school in Afghanistan; why we support the human rights of the women marching through the streets of Iran; why we advocate for the young man denied a job by corruption in Guinea. For America must always stand on the side of freedom and human dignity. (Applause.) Always. (Applause.)

Abroad, America's greatest source of strength has always been our ideals. The same is true at home. We find unity in our incredible diversity, drawing on the promise enshrined in our Constitution: the notion that we're all created equal; that no matter who you are or what you look like, if you abide by the law you should be protected by it; if you adhere to our common values you should be treated no different than anyone else.

We must continually renew this promise. My administration has a Civil Rights Division that is once again prosecuting civil rights violations and employment discrimination. (Applause.) We finally strengthened our laws to protect against crimes driven by hate. (Applause.) This year, I will work with Congress and our military to finally repeal the law that denies gay Americans the right to serve the country they love because of who they are. (Applause.) It's the right thing to do. (Applause.)

We're going to crack down on violations of equal pay laws -- so that women get equal pay for an equal day's work. (Applause.) And we should continue the work of fixing our broken immigration system -- to secure our borders and enforce our laws, and ensure that everyone who plays by the rules can contribute to our economy and enrich our nation. (Applause.)

In the end, it's our ideals, our values that built America -- values that allowed us to forge a nation made up of immigrants from every corner of the globe; values that drive our citizens

still. Every day, Americans meet their responsibilities to their families and their employers. Time and again, they lend a hand to their neighbors and give back to their country. They take pride in their labor, and are generous in spirit. These aren't Republican values or Democratic values that they're living by; business values or labor values. They're American values.

Unfortunately, too many of our citizens have lost faith that our biggest institutions — our corporations, our media, and, yes, our government — still reflect these same values. Each of these institutions are full of honorable men and women doing important work that helps our country prosper. But each time a CEO rewards himself for failure, or a banker puts the rest of us at risk for his own selfish gain, people's doubts grow. Each time lobbyists game the system or politicians tear each other down instead of lifting this country up, we lose faith. The more that TV pundits reduce serious debates to silly arguments, big issues into sound bites, our citizens turn away.

No wonder there's so much cynicism out there. No wonder there's so much disappointment.

I campaigned on the promise of change — change we can believe in, the slogan went. And right now, I know there are many Americans who aren't sure if they still believe we can change — or that I can deliver it.

But remember this — I never suggested that change would be easy, or that I could do it alone. Democracy in a nation of 300 million people can be noisy and messy and complicated. And when you try to do big things and make big changes, it stirs passions and controversy. That's just how it is.

Those of us in public office can respond to this reality by playing it safe and avoid telling hard truths and pointing fingers. We can do what's necessary to keep our poll numbers high, and get through the next election instead of doing what's best for the next generation.

But I also know this: If people had made that decision 50 years ago, or 100 years ago, or

200 years ago, we wouldn't be here tonight. The only reason we are here is because generations of Americans were unafraid to do what was hard; to do what was needed even when success was uncertain; to do what it took to keep the dream of this nation alive for their children and their grandchildren.

Our administration has had some political setbacks this year, and some of them were deserved. But I wake up every day knowing that they are nothing compared to the setbacks that families all across this country have faced this year. And what keeps me going — what keeps me fighting — is that despite all these setbacks, that spirit of determination and optimism, that fundamental decency that has always been at the core of the American people, that lives on.

It lives on in the struggling small business owner who wrote to me of his company, "None of us," he said, "...are willing to consider, even slightly, that we might fail."

It lives on in the woman who said that even though she and her neighbors have felt the pain of recession, "We are strong. We are resilient. We are American."

It lives on in the 8-year-old boy in Louisiana, who just sent me his allowance and asked if I would give it to the people of Haiti.

And it lives on in all the Americans who've dropped everything to go someplace they've never been and pull people they've never known from the rubble, prompting chants of "U.S.A.! U.S.A.! U.S.A.!" when another life was saved.

The spirit that has sustained this nation for more than two centuries lives on in you, its people. We have finished a difficult year. We have come through a difficult decade. But a new year has come. A new decade stretches before us. We don't quit. I don't quit. (Applause.) Let's seize this moment -- to start anew, to carry the dream forward, and to strengthen our union once more. (Applause.)

Thank you. God bless you. And God bless the United States of America. (Applause.)

A.5 Transcription du texte 5

Good evening. As we speak, our nation faces a multitude of challenges. At home, our top priority is to recover and rebuild from a recession that has touched the lives of nearly every American. Abroad, our brave men and women in uniform are taking the fight to al Qaeda wherever it exists. And tonight, I've returned from a trip to the Gulf Coast to speak with you about the battle we're waging against an oil spill that is assaulting our shores and our citizens.

On April 20th, an explosion ripped through BP Deepwater Horizon drilling rig, about 40 miles off the coast of Louisiana. Eleven workers lost their lives. Seventeen others were injured. And soon, nearly a mile beneath the surface of the ocean, oil began spewing into the water.

Because there has never been a leak this size at this depth, stopping it has tested the limits of human technology. That's why just after the rig sank, I assembled a team of our nation's best scientists and engineers to tackle this challenge -- a team led by Dr. Steven Chu, a Nobel Prize-winning physicist and our nation's Secretary of Energy. Scientists at our national labs and experts from academia and other oil companies have also provided ideas and advice.

As a result of these efforts, we've directed BP to mobilize additional equipment and technology. And in the coming weeks and days, these efforts should capture up to 90 percent of the oil leaking out of the well. This is until the company finishes drilling a relief well later in the summer that's expected to stop the leak completely.

Already, this oil spill is the worst environmental disaster America has ever faced. And unlike an earthquake or a hurricane, it's not a single event that does its damage in a matter of minutes or days. The millions of gallons of oil that have spilled into the Gulf of Mexico are more like an epidemic, one that we will be fighting for months and even years.

But make no mistake: We will fight this spill with everything we've got for as long as it takes. We will make BP pay for the damage their company has caused. And we will do whatever's necessary to help the Gulf Coast and its people recover from this tragedy.

Tonight I'd like to lay out for you what our battle plan is going forward: what we're doing to clean up the oil, what we're doing to help our neighbors in the Gulf, and what we're doing to make sure that a catastrophe like this never happens again.

First, the cleanup. From the very beginning of this crisis, the federal government has been in charge of the largest environmental cleanup effort in our nation's history -- an effort led by Admiral Thad Allen, who has almost 40 years of experience responding to disasters. We now have nearly 30,000 personnel who are working across four states to contain and clean up the oil. Thousands of ships and other vessels are responding in the Gulf. And I've authorized the deployment of over 17,000 National Guard members along the coast. These servicemen and women are ready to help stop the oil from coming ashore, they're ready to help clean the beaches, train response workers, or even help with processing claims -- and I urge the governors in the affected states to activate these troops as soon as possible.

Because of our efforts, millions of gallons of oil have already been removed from the water through burning, skimming and other collection methods. Over five and a half million feet of boom has been laid across the water to block and absorb the approaching oil. We've approved the construction of new barrier islands in Louisiana to try to stop the oil before it reaches the shore, and we're working with Alabama, Mississippi and Florida to implement creative approaches to their unique coastlines.

As the cleanup continues, we will offer whatever additional resources and assistance our coastal states may need. Now, a mobilization of this speed and magnitude will never be perfect, and new challenges will always arise. I saw and heard evidence of that during this trip. So if something isn't working, we want to hear about it. If there are problems in the operation, we will fix them.

But we have to recognize that despite our best efforts, oil has already caused damage to our coastline and its wildlife. And sadly, no matter how effective our response is, there will be more oil and more damage before this siege is done. That's why the second thing we're focused on is the recovery and restoration of the Gulf Coast.

You know, for generations, men and women who call this region home have made their living from the water. That living is now in jeopardy. I've talked to shrimpers and fishermen who don't know how they're going to support their families this year. I've seen empty docks and restaurants with fewer customers — even in areas where the beaches are not yet affected. I've talked to owners of shops and hotels who wonder when the tourists might start coming back. The sadness and the anger they feel is not just about the money they've lost. It's about a wrenching anxiety that their way of life may be lost.

I refuse to let that happen. Tomorrow, I will meet with the chairman of BP and inform him that he is to set aside whatever resources are required to compensate the workers and business owners who have been harmed as a result of his company's recklessness. And this fund will not be controlled by BP. In order to ensure that all legitimate claims are paid out in a fair and timely manner, the account must and will be administered by an independent third party.

Beyond compensating the people of the Gulf in the short term, it's also clear we need a long-term plan to restore the unique beauty and bounty of this region. The oil spill represents just the latest blow to a place that's already suffered multiple economic disasters and decades of environmental degradation that has led to disappearing wetlands and habitats. And the region still hasn't recovered from Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. That's why we must make a commitment to the Gulf Coast that goes beyond responding to the crisis of the moment.

I make that commitment tonight. Earlier, I asked Ray Mabus, the Secretary of the Navy, who is also a former governor of Mississippi and a son of the Gulf Coast, to develop a long-term Gulf Coast Restoration Plan as soon as possible. The plan will be designed by states, local communities, tribes, fishermen, businesses, conservationists and other Gulf residents.

And BP will pay for the impact this spill has had on the region.

The third part of our response plan is the steps we're taking to ensure that a disaster like this does not happen again. A few months ago, I approved a proposal to consider new, limited offshore drilling under the assurance that it would be absolutely safe — that the proper technology would be in place and the necessary precautions would be taken.

That obviously was not the case in the Deepwater Horizon rig, and I want to know why. The American people deserve to know why. The families I met with last week who lost their loved ones in the explosion -- these families deserve to know why. And so I've established a National Commission to understand the causes of this disaster and offer recommendations on what additional safety and environmental standards we need to put in place. Already, I've issued a six-month moratorium on deepwater drilling. I know this creates difficulty for the people who work on these rigs, but for the sake of their safety, and for the sake of the entire region, we need to know the facts before we allow deepwater drilling to continue. And while I urge the Commission to complete its work as quickly as possible, I expect them to do that work thoroughly and impartially.

One place we've already begun to take action is at the agency in charge of regulating drilling and issuing permits, known as the Minerals Management Service. Over the last decade, this agency has become emblematic of a failed philosophy that views all regulation with hostility -- a philosophy that says corporations should be allowed to play by their own rules and police themselves. At this agency, industry insiders were put in charge of industry oversight. Oil companies showered regulators with gifts and favors, and were essentially allowed to conduct their own safety inspections and write their own regulations.

When Ken Salazar became my Secretary of the Interior, one of his very first acts was to clean up the worst of the corruption at this agency. But it's now clear that the problem there ran much deeper, and the pace of reform was just too slow. And so Secretary Salazar and I are bringing in new leadership at the agency -- Michael Bromwich, who was a tough federal prosecutor and Inspector General. And his charge over the next few months is to build an

organization that acts as the oil industry's watchdog -- not its partner.

So one of the lessons we've learned from this spill is that we need better regulations, better safety standards, and better enforcement when it comes to offshore drilling. But a larger lesson is that no matter how much we improve our regulation of the industry, drilling for oil these days entails greater risk. After all, oil is a finite resource. We consume more than 20 percent of the world's oil, but have less than 2 percent of the world's oil reserves. And that's part of the reason oil companies are drilling a mile beneath the surface of the ocean -- because we're running out of places to drill on land and in shallow water.

For decades, we have known the days of cheap and easily accessible oil were numbered. For decades, we've talked and talked about the need to end America's century-long addiction to fossil fuels. And for decades, we have failed to act with the sense of urgency that this challenge requires. Time and again, the path forward has been blocked -- not only by oil industry lobbyists, but also by a lack of political courage and candor.

The consequences of our inaction are now in plain sight. Countries like China are investing in clean energy jobs and industries that should be right here in America. Each day, we send nearly \$1 billion of our wealth to foreign countries for their oil. And today, as we look to the Gulf, we see an entire way of life being threatened by a menacing cloud of black crude.

We cannot consign our children to this future. The tragedy unfolding on our coast is the most painful and powerful reminder yet that the time to embrace a clean energy future is now. Now is the moment for this generation to embark on a national mission to unleash America's innovation and seize control of our own destiny.

This is not some distant vision for America. The transition away from fossil fuels is going to take some time, but over the last year and a half, we've already taken unprecedented action to jumpstart the clean energy industry. As we speak, old factories are reopening to produce wind turbines, people are going back to work installing energy-efficient windows,

and small businesses are making solar panels. Consumers are buying more efficient cars and trucks, and families are making their homes more energy-efficient. Scientists and researchers are discovering clean energy technologies that someday will lead to entire new industries.

Each of us has a part to play in a new future that will benefit all of us. As we recover from this recession, the transition to clean energy has the potential to grow our economy and create millions of jobs — but only if we accelerate that transition. Only if we seize the moment. And only if we rally together and act as one nation — workers and entrepreneurs; scientists and citizens; the public and private sectors.

When I was a candidate for this office, I laid out a set of principles that would move our country towards energy independence. Last year, the House of Representatives acted on these principles by passing a strong and comprehensive energy and climate bill — a bill that finally makes clean energy the profitable kind of energy for America's businesses.

Now, there are costs associated with this transition. And there are some who believe that we can't afford those costs right now. I say we can't afford not to change how we produce and use energy — because the long-term costs to our economy, our national security, and our environment are far greater.

So I'm happy to look at other ideas and approaches from either party — as long they seriously tackle our addiction to fossil fuels. Some have suggested raising efficiency standards in our buildings like we did in our cars and trucks. Some believe we should set standards to ensure that more of our electricity comes from wind and solar power. Others wonder why the energy industry only spends a fraction of what the high-tech industry does on research and development — and want to rapidly boost our investments in such research and development.

All of these approaches have merit, and deserve a fair hearing in the months ahead. But the one approach I will not accept is inaction. The one answer I will not settle for is the idea that this challenge is somehow too big and too difficult to meet. You know, the same thing

was said about our ability to produce enough planes and tanks in World War II. The same thing was said about our ability to harness the science and technology to land a man safely on the surface of the moon. And yet, time and again, we have refused to settle for the paltry limits of conventional wisdom. Instead, what has defined us as a nation since our founding is the capacity to shape our destiny — our determination to fight for the America we want for our children. Even if we're unsure exactly what that looks like. Even if we don't yet know precisely how we're going to get there. We know we'll get there.

It's a faith in the future that sustains us as a people. It is that same faith that sustains our neighbors in the Gulf right now.

Each year, at the beginning of shrimping season, the region's fishermen take part in a tradition that was brought to America long ago by fishing immigrants from Europe. It's called "The Blessing of the Fleet," and today it's a celebration where clergy from different religions gather to say a prayer for the safety and success of the men and women who will soon head out to sea — some for weeks at a time.

The ceremony goes on in good times and in bad. It took place after Katrina, and it took place a few weeks ago — at the beginning of the most difficult season these fishermen have ever faced.

And still, they came and they prayed. For as a priest and former fisherman once said of the tradition, "The blessing is not that God has promised to remove all obstacles and dangers. The blessing is that He is with us always," a blessing that's granted "even in the midst of the storm."

The oil spill is not the last crisis America will face. This nation has known hard times before and we will surely know them again. What sees us through — what has always seen us through — is our strength, our resilience, and our unyielding faith that something better awaits us if we summon the courage to reach for it.

Tonight, we pray for that courage. We pray for the people of the Gulf. And we pray

that a hand may guide us through the storm towards a brighter day. Thank you, God bless you, and may God bless the United States of America.

A.6 Transcription du texte 6

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Vice President, members of Congress, distinguished guests, and fellow Americans:

Tonight I want to begin by congratulating the men and women of the 112th Congress, as well as your new Speaker, John Boehner. (Applause.) And as we mark this occasion, we're also mindful of the empty chair in this chamber, and we pray for the health of our colleague - and our friend — Gabby Giffords. (Applause.)

It's no secret that those of us here tonight have had our differences over the last two years. The debates have been contentious; we have fought fiercely for our beliefs. And that's a good thing. That's what a robust democracy demands. That's what helps set us apart as a nation.

But there's a reason the tragedy in Tucson gave us pause. Amid all the noise and passion and rancor of our public debate, Tucson reminded us that no matter who we are or where we come from, each of us is a part of something greater — something more consequential than party or political preference.

We are part of the American family. We believe that in a country where every race and faith and point of view can be found, we are still bound together as one people; that we share common hopes and a common creed; that the dreams of a little girl in Tucson are not so different than those of our own children, and that they all deserve the chance to be fulfilled.

That, too, is what sets us apart as a nation. (Applause.)

Now, by itself, this simple recognition won't usher in a new era of cooperation. What comes of this moment is up to us. What comes of this moment will be determined not by

whether we can sit together tonight, but whether we can work together tomorrow. (Applause.)

I believe we can. And I believe we must. That's what the people who sent us here expect of us. With their votes, they've determined that governing will now be a shared responsibility between parties. New laws will only pass with support from Democrats and Republicans. We will move forward together, or not at all — for the challenges we face are bigger than party, and bigger than politics.

At stake right now is not who wins the next election — after all, we just had an election. At stake is whether new jobs and industries take root in this country, or somewhere else. It's whether the hard work and industry of our people is rewarded. It's whether we sustain the leadership that has made America not just a place on a map, but the light to the world.

We are poised for progress. Two years after the worst recession most of us have ever known, the stock market has come roaring back. Corporate profits are up. The economy is growing again.

But we have never measured progress by these yardsticks alone. We measure progress by the success of our people. By the jobs they can find and the quality of life those jobs offer. By the prospects of a small business owner who dreams of turning a good idea into a thriving enterprise. By the opportunities for a better life that we pass on to our children.

That's the project the American people want us to work on. Together. (Applause.)

We did that in December. Thanks to the tax cuts we passed, Americans' paychecks are a little bigger today. Every business can write off the full cost of new investments that they make this year. And these steps, taken by Democrats and Republicans, will grow the economy and add to the more than one million private sector jobs created last year.

But we have to do more. These steps we've taken over the last two years may have

broken the back of this recession, but to win the future, we'll need to take on challenges that have been decades in the making.

Many people watching tonight can probably remember a time when finding a good job meant showing up at a nearby factory or a business downtown. You didn't always need a degree, and your competition was pretty much limited to your neighbors. If you worked hard, chances are you'd have a job for life, with a decent paycheck and good benefits and the occasional promotion. Maybe you'd even have the pride of seeing your kids work at the same company.

That world has changed. And for many, the change has been painful. I've seen it in the shuttered windows of once booming factories, and the vacant storefronts on once busy Main Streets. I've heard it in the frustrations of Americans who've seen their paychecks dwindle or their jobs disappear — proud men and women who feel like the rules have been changed in the middle of the game.

They're right. The rules have changed. In a single generation, revolutions in technology have transformed the way we live, work and do business. Steel mills that once needed 1,000 workers can now do the same work with 100. Today, just about any company can set up shop, hire workers, and sell their products wherever there's an Internet connection.

Meanwhile, nations like China and India realized that with some changes of their own, they could compete in this new world. And so they started educating their children earlier and longer, with greater emphasis on math and science. They're investing in research and new technologies. Just recently, China became the home to the world's largest private solar research facility, and the world's fastest computer.

So, yes, the world has changed. The competition for jobs is real. But this shouldn't discourage us. It should challenge us. Remember — for all the hits we've taken these last few years, for all the naysayers predicting our decline, America still has the largest, most prosperous economy in the world. (Applause.) No workers -- no workers are more

productive than ours. No country has more successful companies, or grants more patents to inventors and entrepreneurs. We're the home to the world's best colleges and universities, where more students come to study than any place on Earth.

What's more, we are the first nation to be founded for the sake of an idea — the idea that each of us deserves the chance to shape our own destiny. That's why centuries of pioneers and immigrants have risked everything to come here. It's why our students don't just memorize equations, but answer questions like "What do you think of that idea? What would you change about the world? What do you want to be when you grow up?"

The future is ours to win. But to get there, we can't just stand still. As Robert Kennedy told us, "The future is not a gift. It is an achievement." Sustaining the American Dream has never been about standing pat. It has required each generation to sacrifice, and struggle, and meet the demands of a new age.

And now it's our turn. We know what it takes to compete for the jobs and industries of our time. We need to out-innovate, out-educate, and out-build the rest of the world. (Applause.) We have to make America the best place on Earth to do business. We need to take responsibility for our deficit and reform our government. That's how our people will prosper. That's how we'll win the future. (Applause.) And tonight, I'd like to talk about how we get there.

The first step in winning the future is encouraging American innovation. None of us can predict with certainty what the next big industry will be or where the new jobs will come from. Thirty years ago, we couldn't know that something called the Internet would lead to an economic revolution. What we can do -- what America does better than anyone else -- is spark the creativity and imagination of our people. We're the nation that put cars in driveways and computers in offices; the nation of Edison and the Wright brothers; of Google and Facebook. In America, innovation doesn't just change our lives. It is how we make our living. (Applause.)

Our free enterprise system is what drives innovation. But because it's not always profitable for companies to invest in basic research, throughout our history, our government has provided cutting-edge scientists and inventors with the support that they need. That's what planted the seeds for the Internet. That's what helped make possible things like computer chips and GPS. Just think of all the good jobs -- from manufacturing to retail -- that have come from these breakthroughs.

Half a century ago, when the Soviets beat us into space with the launch of a satellite called Sputnik, we had no idea how we would beat them to the moon. The science wasn't even there yet. NASA didn't exist. But after investing in better research and education, we didn't just surpass the Soviets; we unleashed a wave of innovation that created new industries and millions of new jobs.

This is our generation's Sputnik moment. Two years ago, I said that we needed to reach a level of research and development we haven't seen since the height of the Space Race. And in a few weeks, I will be sending a budget to Congress that helps us meet that goal. We'll invest in biomedical research, information technology, and especially clean energy technology -- (applause) -- an investment that will strengthen our security, protect our planet, and create countless new jobs for our people.

Already, we're seeing the promise of renewable energy. Robert and Gary Allen are brothers who run a small Michigan roofing company. After September 11th, they volunteered their best roofers to help repair the Pentagon. But half of their factory went unused, and the recession hit them hard. Today, with the help of a government loan, that empty space is being used to manufacture solar shingles that are being sold all across the country. In Robert's words, "We reinvented ourselves."

That's what Americans have done for over 200 years: reinvented ourselves. And to spur on more success stories like the Allen Brothers, we've begun to reinvent our energy policy. We're not just handing out money. We're issuing a challenge. We're telling America's scientists and engineers that if they assemble teams of the best minds in their fields, and focus

on the hardest problems in clean energy, we'll fund the Apollo projects of our time.

At the California Institute of Technology, they're developing a way to turn sunlight and water into fuel for our cars. At Oak Ridge National Laboratory, they're using supercomputers to get a lot more power out of our nuclear facilities. With more research and incentives, we can break our dependence on oil with biofuels, and become the first country to have a million electric vehicles on the road by 2015. (Applause.)

We need to get behind this innovation. And to help pay for it, I'm asking Congress to eliminate the billions in taxpayer dollars we currently give to oil companies. (Applause.) I don't know if -- I don't know if you've noticed, but they're doing just fine on their own. (Laughter.) So instead of subsidizing yesterday's energy, let's invest in tomorrow's.

Now, clean energy breakthroughs will only translate into clean energy jobs if businesses know there will be a market for what they're selling. So tonight, I challenge you to join me in setting a new goal: By 2035, 80 percent of America's electricity will come from clean energy sources. (Applause.)

Some folks want wind and solar. Others want nuclear, clean coal and natural gas. To meet this goal, we will need them all -- and I urge Democrats and Republicans to work together to make it happen. (Applause.)

Maintaining our leadership in research and technology is crucial to America's success. But if we want to win the future -- if we want innovation to produce jobs in America and not overseas -- then we also have to win the race to educate our kids.

Think about it. Over the next 10 years, nearly half of all new jobs will require education that goes beyond a high school education. And yet, as many as a quarter of our students aren't even finishing high school. The quality of our math and science education lags behind many other nations. America has fallen to ninth in the proportion of young people with a college degree. And so the question is whether all of us -- as citizens, and as parents -- are

willing to do what's necessary to give every child a chance to succeed.

That responsibility begins not in our classrooms, but in our homes and communities. It's family that first instills the love of learning in a child. Only parents can make sure the TV is turned off and homework gets done. We need to teach our kids that it's not just the winner of the Super Bowl who deserves to be celebrated, but the winner of the science fair. (Applause.) We need to teach them that success is not a function of fame or PR, but of hard work and discipline.

Our schools share this responsibility. When a child walks into a classroom, it should be a place of high expectations and high performance. But too many schools don't meet this test. That's why instead of just pouring money into a system that's not working, we launched a competition called Race to the Top. To all 50 states, we said, "If you show us the most innovative plans to improve teacher quality and student achievement, we'll show you the money."

Race to the Top is the most meaningful reform of our public schools in a generation. For less than 1 percent of what we spend on education each year, it has led over 40 states to raise their standards for teaching and learning. And these standards were developed, by the way, not by Washington, but by Republican and Democratic governors throughout the country. And Race to the Top should be the approach we follow this year as we replace No Child Left Behind with a law that's more flexible and focused on what's best for our kids. (Applause.)

You see, we know what's possible from our children when reform isn't just a top-down mandate, but the work of local teachers and principals, school boards and communities. Take a school like Bruce Randolph in Denver. Three years ago, it was rated one of the worst schools in Colorado -- located on turf between two rival gangs. But last May, 97 percent of the seniors received their diploma. Most will be the first in their families to go to college. And after the first year of the school's transformation, the principal who made it possible wiped away tears when a student said, "Thank you, Ms. Waters, for showing that we are

smart and we can make it.” (Applause.) That’s what good schools can do, and we want good schools all across the country.

Let’s also remember that after parents, the biggest impact on a child’s success comes from the man or woman at the front of the classroom. In South Korea, teachers are known as “nation builders.” Here in America, it’s time we treated the people who educate our children with the same level of respect. (Applause.) We want to reward good teachers and stop making excuses for bad ones. (Applause.) And over the next 10 years, with so many baby boomers retiring from our classrooms, we want to prepare 100,000 new teachers in the fields of science and technology and engineering and math. (Applause.)

In fact, to every young person listening tonight who’s contemplating their career choice: If you want to make a difference in the life of our nation; if you want to make a difference in the life of a child -- become a teacher. Your country needs you. (Applause.)

Of course, the education race doesn’t end with a high school diploma. To compete, higher education must be within the reach of every American. (Applause.) That’s why we’ve ended the unwarranted taxpayer subsidies that went to banks, and used the savings to make college affordable for millions of students. (Applause.) And this year, I ask Congress to go further, and make permanent our tuition tax credit — worth \$10,000 for four years of college. It’s the right thing to do. (Applause.)

Because people need to be able to train for new jobs and careers in today’s fast-changing economy, we’re also revitalizing America’s community colleges. Last month, I saw the promise of these schools at Forsyth Tech in North Carolina. Many of the students there used to work in the surrounding factories that have since left town. One mother of two, a woman named Kathy Proctor, had worked in the furniture industry since she was 18 years old. And she told me she’s earning her degree in biotechnology now, at 55 years old, not just because the furniture jobs are gone, but because she wants to inspire her children to pursue their dreams, too. As Kathy said, “I hope it tells them to never give up.”

If we take these steps — if we raise expectations for every child, and give them the best possible chance at an education, from the day they are born until the last job they take — we will reach the goal that I set two years ago: By the end of the decade, America will once again have the highest proportion of college graduates in the world. (Applause.)

One last point about education. Today, there are hundreds of thousands of students excelling in our schools who are not American citizens. Some are the children of undocumented workers, who had nothing to do with the actions of their parents. They grew up as Americans and pledge allegiance to our flag, and yet they live every day with the threat of deportation. Others come here from abroad to study in our colleges and universities. But as soon as they obtain advanced degrees, we send them back home to compete against us. It makes no sense.

Now, I strongly believe that we should take on, once and for all, the issue of illegal immigration. And I am prepared to work with Republicans and Democrats to protect our borders, enforce our laws and address the millions of undocumented workers who are now living in the shadows. (Applause.) I know that debate will be difficult. I know it will take time. But tonight, let's agree to make that effort. And let's stop expelling talented, responsible young people who could be staffing our research labs or starting a new business, who could be further enriching this nation. (Applause.)

The third step in winning the future is rebuilding America. To attract new businesses to our shores, we need the fastest, most reliable ways to move people, goods, and information -- from high-speed rail to high-speed Internet. (Applause.)

Our infrastructure used to be the best, but our lead has slipped. South Korean homes now have greater Internet access than we do. Countries in Europe and Russia invest more in their roads and railways than we do. China is building faster trains and newer airports. Meanwhile, when our own engineers graded our nation's infrastructure, they gave us a "D."

We have to do better. America is the nation that built the transcontinental railroad,

brought electricity to rural communities, constructed the Interstate Highway System. The jobs created by these projects didn't just come from laying down track or pavement. They came from businesses that opened near a town's new train station or the new off-ramp.

So over the last two years, we've begun rebuilding for the 21st century, a project that has meant thousands of good jobs for the hard-hit construction industry. And tonight, I'm proposing that we redouble those efforts. (Applause.)

We'll put more Americans to work repairing crumbling roads and bridges. We'll make sure this is fully paid for, attract private investment, and pick projects based [on] what's best for the economy, not politicians.

Within 25 years, our goal is to give 80 percent of Americans access to high-speed rail. (Applause.) This could allow you to go places in half the time it takes to travel by car. For some trips, it will be faster than flying — without the pat-down. (Laughter and applause.) As we speak, routes in California and the Midwest are already underway.

Within the next five years, we'll make it possible for businesses to deploy the next generation of high-speed wireless coverage to 98 percent of all Americans. This isn't just about -- (applause) -- this isn't about faster Internet or fewer dropped calls. It's about connecting every part of America to the digital age. It's about a rural community in Iowa or Alabama where farmers and small business owners will be able to sell their products all over the world. It's about a firefighter who can download the design of a burning building onto a handheld device; a student who can take classes with a digital textbook; or a patient who can have face-to-face video chats with her doctor.

All these investments — in innovation, education, and infrastructure — will make America a better place to do business and create jobs. But to help our companies compete, we also have to knock down barriers that stand in the way of their success.

For example, over the years, a parade of lobbyists has rigged the tax code to benefit

particular companies and industries. Those with accountants or lawyers to work the system can end up paying no taxes at all. But all the rest are hit with one of the highest corporate tax rates in the world. It makes no sense, and it has to change. (Applause.)

So tonight, I'm asking Democrats and Republicans to simplify the system. Get rid of the loopholes. Level the playing field. And use the savings to lower the corporate tax rate for the first time in 25 years — without adding to our deficit. It can be done. (Applause.)

To help businesses sell more products abroad, we set a goal of doubling our exports by 2014 — because the more we export, the more jobs we create here at home. Already, our exports are up. Recently, we signed agreements with India and China that will support more than 250,000 jobs here in the United States. And last month, we finalized a trade agreement with South Korea that will support at least 70,000 American jobs. This agreement has unprecedented support from business and labor, Democrats and Republicans -- and I ask this Congress to pass it as soon as possible. (Applause.)

Now, before I took office, I made it clear that we would enforce our trade agreements, and that I would only sign deals that keep faith with American workers and promote American jobs. That's what we did with Korea, and that's what I intend to do as we pursue agreements with Panama and Colombia and continue our Asia Pacific and global trade talks. (Applause.)

To reduce barriers to growth and investment, I've ordered a review of government regulations. When we find rules that put an unnecessary burden on businesses, we will fix them. (Applause.) But I will not hesitate to create or enforce common-sense safeguards to protect the American people. (Applause.) That's what we've done in this country for more than a century. It's why our food is safe to eat, our water is safe to drink, and our air is safe to breathe. It's why we have speed limits and child labor laws. It's why last year, we put in place consumer protections against hidden fees and penalties by credit card companies and new rules to prevent another financial crisis. (Applause.) And it's why we passed reform that finally prevents the health insurance industry from exploiting patients. (Applause.)

Now, I have heard rumors that a few of you still have concerns about our new health care law. (Laughter.) So let me be the first to say that anything can be improved. If you have ideas about how to improve this law by making care better or more affordable, I am eager to work with you. We can start right now by correcting a flaw in the legislation that has placed an unnecessary bookkeeping burden on small businesses. (Applause.)

What I'm not willing to do -- what I'm not willing to do is go back to the days when insurance companies could deny someone coverage because of a preexisting condition. (Applause.)

I'm not willing to tell James Howard, a brain cancer patient from Texas, that his treatment might not be covered. I'm not willing to tell Jim Houser, a small business man from Oregon, that he has to go back to paying \$5,000 more to cover his employees. As we speak, this law is making prescription drugs cheaper for seniors and giving uninsured students a chance to stay on their patients' -- parents' coverage. (Applause.)

So I say to this chamber tonight, instead of re-fighting the battles of the last two years, let's fix what needs fixing and let's move forward. (Applause.)

Now, the final critical step in winning the future is to make sure we aren't buried under a mountain of debt.

We are living with a legacy of deficit spending that began almost a decade ago. And in the wake of the financial crisis, some of that was necessary to keep credit flowing, save jobs, and put money in people's pockets.

But now that the worst of the recession is over, we have to confront the fact that our government spends more than it takes in. That is not sustainable. Every day, families sacrifice to live within their means. They deserve a government that does the same.

So tonight, I am proposing that starting this year, we freeze annual domestic spending

for the next five years. (Applause.) Now, this would reduce the deficit by more than \$400 billion over the next decade, and will bring discretionary spending to the lowest share of our economy since Dwight Eisenhower was President.

This freeze will require painful cuts. Already, we've frozen the salaries of hardworking federal employees for the next two years. I've proposed cuts to things I care deeply about, like community action programs. The Secretary of Defense has also agreed to cut tens of billions of dollars in spending that he and his generals believe our military can do without. (Applause.)

I recognize that some in this chamber have already proposed deeper cuts, and I'm willing to eliminate whatever we can honestly afford to do without. But let's make sure that we're not doing it on the backs of our most vulnerable citizens. (Applause.) And let's make sure that what we're cutting is really excess weight. Cutting the deficit by gutting our investments in innovation and education is like lightening an overloaded airplane by removing its engine. It may make you feel like you're flying high at first, but it won't take long before you feel the impact. (Laughter.)

Now, most of the cuts and savings I've proposed only address annual domestic spending, which represents a little more than 12 percent of our budget. To make further progress, we have to stop pretending that cutting this kind of spending alone will be enough. It won't. (Applause.)

The bipartisan fiscal commission I created last year made this crystal clear. I don't agree with all their proposals, but they made important progress. And their conclusion is that the only way to tackle our deficit is to cut excessive spending wherever we find it — in domestic spending, defense spending, health care spending, and spending through tax breaks and loopholes. (Applause.)

This means further reducing health care costs, including programs like Medicare and Medicaid, which are the single biggest contributor to our long-term deficit. The health

insurance law we passed last year will slow these rising costs, which is part of the reason that nonpartisan economists have said that repealing the health care law would add a quarter of a trillion dollars to our deficit. Still, I'm willing to look at other ideas to bring down costs, including one that Republicans suggested last year -- medical malpractice reform to rein in frivolous lawsuits. (Applause.)

To put us on solid ground, we should also find a bipartisan solution to strengthen Social Security for future generations. (Applause.) We must do it without putting at risk current retirees, the most vulnerable, or people with disabilities; without slashing benefits for future generations; and without subjecting Americans' guaranteed retirement income to the whims of the stock market. (Applause.)

And if we truly care about our deficit, we simply can't afford a permanent extension of the tax cuts for the wealthiest 2 percent of Americans. (Applause.) Before we take money away from our schools or scholarships away from our students, we should ask millionaires to give up their tax break. It's not a matter of punishing their success. It's about promoting America's success. (Applause.)

In fact, the best thing we could do on taxes for all Americans is to simplify the individual tax code. (Applause.) This will be a tough job, but members of both parties have expressed an interest in doing this, and I am prepared to join them. (Applause.)

So now is the time to act. Now is the time for both sides and both houses of Congress — Democrats and Republicans — to forge a principled compromise that gets the job done. If we make the hard choices now to rein in our deficits, we can make the investments we need to win the future.

Let me take this one step further. We shouldn't just give our people a government that's more affordable. We should give them a government that's more competent and more efficient. We can't win the future with a government of the past. (Applause.)

We live and do business in the Information Age, but the last major reorganization of the government happened in the age of black-and-white TV. There are 12 different agencies that deal with exports. There are at least five different agencies that deal with housing policy. Then there's my favorite example: The Interior Department is in charge of salmon while they're in fresh water, but the Commerce Department handles them when they're in saltwater. (Laughter.) I hear it gets even more complicated once they're smoked. (Laughter and applause.)

Now, we've made great strides over the last two years in using technology and getting rid of waste. Veterans can now download their electronic medical records with a click of the mouse. We're selling acres of federal office space that hasn't been used in years, and we'll cut through red tape to get rid of more. But we need to think bigger. In the coming months, my administration will develop a proposal to merge, consolidate, and reorganize the federal government in a way that best serves the goal of a more competitive America. I will submit that proposal to Congress for a vote — and we will push to get it passed. (Applause.)

In the coming year, we'll also work to rebuild people's faith in the institution of government. Because you deserve to know exactly how and where your tax dollars are being spent, you'll be able to go to a website and get that information for the very first time in history. Because you deserve to know when your elected officials are meeting with lobbyists, I ask Congress to do what the White House has already done -- put that information online. And because the American people deserve to know that special interests aren't larding up legislation with pet projects, both parties in Congress should know this: If a bill comes to my desk with earmarks inside, I will veto it. I will veto it. (Applause.)

The 21st century government that's open and competent. A government that lives within its means. An economy that's driven by new skills and new ideas. Our success in this new and changing world will require reform, responsibility, and innovation. It will also require us to approach that world with a new level of engagement in our foreign affairs.

Just as jobs and businesses can now race across borders, so can new threats and new

challenges. No single wall separates East and West. No one rival superpower is aligned against us.

And so we must defeat determined enemies, wherever they are, and build coalitions that cut across lines of region and race and religion. And America's moral example must always shine for all who yearn for freedom and justice and dignity. And because we've begun this work, tonight we can say that American leadership has been renewed and America's standing has been restored.

Look to Iraq, where nearly 100,000 of our brave men and women have left with their heads held high. (Applause.) American combat patrols have ended, violence is down, and a new government has been formed. This year, our civilians will forge a lasting partnership with the Iraqi people, while we finish the job of bringing our troops out of Iraq. America's commitment has been kept. The Iraq war is coming to an end. (Applause.)

Of course, as we speak, al Qaeda and their affiliates continue to plan attacks against us. Thanks to our intelligence and law enforcement professionals, we're disrupting plots and securing our cities and skies. And as extremists try to inspire acts of violence within our borders, we are responding with the strength of our communities, with respect for the rule of law, and with the conviction that American Muslims are a part of our American family. (Applause.)

We've also taken the fight to al Qaeda and their allies abroad. In Afghanistan, our troops have taken Taliban strongholds and trained Afghan security forces. Our purpose is clear: By preventing the Taliban from reestablishing a stranglehold over the Afghan people, we will deny al Qaeda the safe haven that served as a launching pad for 9/11.

Thanks to our heroic troops and civilians, fewer Afghans are under the control of the insurgency. There will be tough fighting ahead, and the Afghan government will need to deliver better governance. But we are strengthening the capacity of the Afghan people and building an enduring partnership with them. This year, we will work with nearly 50 countries

to begin a transition to an Afghan lead. And this July, we will begin to bring our troops home. (Applause.)

In Pakistan, al Qaeda's leadership is under more pressure than at any point since 2001. Their leaders and operatives are being removed from the battlefield. Their safe havens are shrinking. And we've sent a message from the Afghan border to the Arabian Peninsula to all parts of the globe: We will not relent, we will not waver, and we will defeat you. (Applause.)

American leadership can also be seen in the effort to secure the worst weapons of war. Because Republicans and Democrats approved the New START treaty, far fewer nuclear weapons and launchers will be deployed. Because we rallied the world, nuclear materials are being locked down on every continent so they never fall into the hands of terrorists. (Applause.)

Because of a diplomatic effort to insist that Iran meet its obligations, the Iranian government now faces tougher sanctions, tighter sanctions than ever before. And on the Korean Peninsula, we stand with our ally South Korea, and insist that North Korea keeps its commitment to abandon nuclear weapons. (Applause.)

This is just a part of how we're shaping a world that favors peace and prosperity. With our European allies, we revitalized NATO and increased our cooperation on everything from counterterrorism to missile defense. We've reset our relationship with Russia, strengthened Asian alliances, built new partnerships with nations like India.

This March, I will travel to Brazil, Chile, and El Salvador to forge new alliances across the Americas. Around the globe, we're standing with those who take responsibility — helping farmers grow more food, supporting doctors who care for the sick, and combating the corruption that can rot a society and rob people of opportunity.

Recent events have shown us that what sets us apart must not just be our power — it

must also be the purpose behind it. In south Sudan — with our assistance — the people were finally able to vote for independence after years of war. (Applause.) Thousands lined up before dawn. People danced in the streets. One man who lost four of his brothers at war summed up the scene around him: “This was a battlefield for most of my life,” he said. “Now we want to be free.” (Applause.)

And we saw that same desire to be free in Tunisia, where the will of the people proved more powerful than the writ of a dictator. And tonight, let us be clear: The United States of America stands with the people of Tunisia, and supports the democratic aspirations of all people. (Applause.)

We must never forget that the things we’ve struggled for, and fought for, live in the hearts of people everywhere. And we must always remember that the Americans who have borne the greatest burden in this struggle are the men and women who serve our country. (Applause.)

Tonight, let us speak with one voice in reaffirming that our nation is united in support of our troops and their families. Let us serve them as well as they’ve served us -- by giving them the equipment they need, by providing them with the care and benefits that they have earned, and by enlisting our veterans in the great task of building our own nation.

Our troops come from every corner of this country — they’re black, white, Latino, Asian, Native American. They are Christian and Hindu, Jewish and Muslim. And, yes, we know that some of them are gay. Starting this year, no American will be forbidden from serving the country they love because of who they love. (Applause.) And with that change, I call on all our college campuses to open their doors to our military recruiters and ROTC. It is time to leave behind the divisive battles of the past. It is time to move forward as one nation. (Applause.)

We should have no illusions about the work ahead of us. Reforming our schools, changing the way we use energy, reducing our deficit — none of this will be easy. All of it

will take time. And it will be harder because we will argue about everything. The costs. The details. The letter of every law.

Of course, some countries don't have this problem. If the central government wants a railroad, they build a railroad, no matter how many homes get bulldozed. If they don't want a bad story in the newspaper, it doesn't get written.

And yet, as contentious and frustrating and messy as our democracy can sometimes be, I know there isn't a person here who would trade places with any other nation on Earth. (Applause.)

We may have differences in policy, but we all believe in the rights enshrined in our Constitution. We may have different opinions, but we believe in the same promise that says this is a place where you can make it if you try. We may have different backgrounds, but we believe in the same dream that says this is a country where anything is possible. No matter who you are. No matter where you come from.

That dream is why I can stand here before you tonight. That dream is why a working-class kid from Scranton can sit behind me. (Laughter and applause.) That dream is why someone who began by sweeping the floors of his father's Cincinnati bar can preside as Speaker of the House in the greatest nation on Earth. (Applause.)

That dream — that American Dream — is what drove the Allen Brothers to reinvent their roofing company for a new era. It's what drove those students at Forsyth Tech to learn a new skill and work towards the future. And that dream is the story of a small business owner named Brandon Fisher.

Brandon started a company in Berlin, Pennsylvania, that specializes in a new kind of drilling technology. And one day last summer, he saw the news that halfway across the world, 33 men were trapped in a Chilean mine, and no one knew how to save them.

But Brandon thought his company could help. And so he designed a rescue that would come to be known as Plan B. His employees worked around the clock to manufacture the necessary drilling equipment. And Brandon left for Chile.

Along with others, he began drilling a 2,000-foot hole into the ground, working three- or four-hour -- three or four days at a time without any sleep. Thirty-seven days later, Plan B succeeded, and the miners were rescued. (Applause.) But because he didn't want all of the attention, Brandon wasn't there when the miners emerged. He'd already gone back home, back to work on his next project.

And later, one of his employees said of the rescue, "We proved that Center Rock is a little company, but we do big things." (Applause.)

We do big things.

From the earliest days of our founding, America has been the story of ordinary people who dare to dream. That's how we win the future.

We're a nation that says, "I might not have a lot of money, but I have this great idea for a new company." "I might not come from a family of college graduates, but I will be the first to get my degree." "I might not know those people in trouble, but I think I can help them, and I need to try." "I'm not sure how we'll reach that better place beyond the horizon, but I know we'll get there. I know we will."

We do big things. (Applause.)

The idea of America endures. Our destiny remains our choice. And tonight, more than two centuries later, it's because of our people that our future is hopeful, our journey goes forward, and the state of our union is strong.

Thank you. God bless you, and may God bless the United States of America.

(Applause.)

A.7 Transcription du texte 7

Thank you so much. Thank you, everybody. (Applause.) Everybody, please have a seat. Please have a seat. It is wonderful to be back at Georgetown. (Applause.)

We've got a number of acknowledgements. First of all, I just want to thank President DeGioia for his outstanding leadership here, but also for his hospitality.

We also have here Secretary Steven Chu, my Energy Secretary. Where is Steven? There he is over there. (Applause.) Secretary Ken Salazar of the Interior Department. (Applause.) Secretary Tom Vilsack, our Agriculture Secretary. (Applause.) Ray LaHood, our Transportation Secretary. (Applause.) Lisa Jackson, our EPA Administrator. (Applause.) Nancy Sutley, who is our Council on Environmental Quality director, right here. (Applause.)

A couple of great members of Congress -- Congressman Jay Inslee of Washington. Where's Jay? There he is over there. (Applause.) And Rush Holt of New Jersey is here. (Applause.) We've got -- he didn't bring the weather with him -- but the mayor of Los Angeles, Antonio Villaraigosa, is in the house. (Applause.) Mayor Scott Smith of Mesa, Arizona, is here. (Applause.)

And most importantly, the students of Georgetown University are in the house. (Applause.)

I want to start with a difficult subject: The Hoyas had a tough loss, Coach. (Laughter.) Coach is here, too, and I love Coach Thompson. I love his dad and the great tradition that they've had. (Applause.) And it turned out VCU was pretty good. (Laughter.) I had Georgetown winning that game in my bracket, so we're all hurting here. (Laughter.) But that's what next year is for.

We meet here at a tumultuous time for the world. In a matter of months, we've seen

regimes toppled. We've seen democracy take root in North Africa and in the Middle East. We've witnessed a terrible earthquake, a catastrophic tsunami, a nuclear emergency that has battered one of our strongest allies and closest friends in the world's third-largest economy. We've led an international effort in Libya to prevent a massacre and maintain stability throughout the broader region. (Applause.)

And as Americans, we're heartbroken by the lives that have been lost as a result of these events. We're deeply moved by the thirst for freedom in so many nations, and we're moved by the strength and the perseverance of the Japanese people. And it's natural, I think, to feel anxious about what all of this means for us.

And one big area of concern has been the cost and security of our energy. Obviously, the situation in the Middle East implicates our energy security. The situation in Japan leads us to ask questions about our energy sources.

In an economy that relies so heavily on oil, rising prices at the pump affect everybody — workers, farmers, truck drivers, restaurant owners, students who are lucky enough to have a car. (Laughter.) Businesses see rising prices at the pump hurt their bottom line. Families feel the pinch when they fill up their tank. And for Americans that are already struggling to get by, a hike in gas prices really makes their lives that much harder. It hurts.

If you're somebody who works in a relatively low-wage job and you've got to commute to work, it takes up a big chunk of your income. You may not be able to buy as many groceries. You may have to cut back on medicines in order to fill up the gas tank. So this is something that everybody is affected by.

Now, here's the thing — we have been down this road before. Remember, it was just three years ago that gas prices topped \$4 a gallon. I remember because I was in the middle of a presidential campaign. Working folks certainly remember because it hit a lot of people pretty hard. And because we were at the height of political season, you had all kinds of slogans and gimmicks and outraged politicians -- they were waving their three-point plans for

\$2 a gallon gas. You remember that -- "drill, baby, drill" -- and we were going through all that. (Laughter.) And none of it was really going to do anything to solve the problem. There was a lot of hue and cry, a lot of fulminating and hand-wringing, but nothing actually happened. Imagine that in Washington. (Laughter.)

The truth is, none of these gimmicks, none of these slogans made a bit of difference. When gas prices finally did fall, it was mostly because the global recession had led to less demand for oil. Companies were producing less; the demand for petroleum went down; prices went down. Now that the economy is recovering, demand is back up. Add the turmoil in the Middle East, and it's not surprising that oil prices are higher. And every time the price of a barrel of oil on the world market rises by \$10, a gallon of gas goes up by about 25 cents.

The point is the ups and downs in gas prices historically have tended to be temporary. But when you look at the long-term trends, there are going to be more ups in gas prices than downs in gas prices. And that's because you've got countries like India and China that are growing at a rapid clip, and as 2 billion more people start consuming more goods -- they want cars just like we've got cars; they want to use energy to make their lives a little easier just like we've got -- it is absolutely certain that demand will go up a lot faster than supply. It's just a fact.

So here's the bottom line: There are no quick fixes. Anybody who tells you otherwise isn't telling you the truth. And we will keep on being a victim to shifts in the oil market until we finally get serious about a long-term policy for a secure, affordable energy future.

We're going to have to think long term, which is why I came here, to talk to young people here at Georgetown, because you have more of a stake in us getting our energy policy right than just about anybody.

Now, here's a source of concern, though. We've known about the dangers of our oil dependence for decades. Richard Nixon talked about freeing ourselves from dependence on foreign oil. And every President since that time has talked about freeing ourselves from

dependence on foreign oil. Politicians of every stripe have promised energy independence, but that promise has so far gone unmet.

I talked about reducing America's dependence on oil when I was running for President, and I'm proud of the historic progress that we've made over the last two years towards that goal, and we'll talk about that a little bit. But I've got to be honest. We've run into the same political gridlock, the same inertia that has held us back for decades.

That has to change. That has to change. We cannot keep going from shock when gas prices go up to trance when they go back down -- we go back to doing the same things we've been doing until the next time there's a price spike, and then we're shocked again. We can't rush to propose action when gas prices are high and then hit the snooze button when they fall again. We can't keep on doing that.

The United States of America cannot afford to bet our long-term prosperity, our long-term security on a resource that will eventually run out, and even before it runs out will get more and more expensive to extract from the ground. We can't afford it when the costs to our economy, our country, and our planet are so high. Not when your generation needs us to get this right. It's time to do what we can to secure our energy future.

And today, I want to announce a new goal, one that is reasonable, one that is achievable, and one that is necessary.

When I was elected to this office, America imported 11 million barrels of oil a day. By a little more than a decade from now, we will have cut that by one-third. That is something that we can achieve. (Applause.) We can cut our oil dependence -- we can cut our oil dependence by a third.

I set this goal knowing that we're still going to have to import some oil. It will remain an important part of our energy portfolio for quite some time, until we've gotten alternative energy strategies fully in force. And when it comes to the oil we import from other nations,

obviously we've got to look at neighbors like Canada and Mexico that are stable and steady and reliable sources. We also have to look at other countries like Brazil. Part of the reason I went down there is to talk about energy with the Brazilians. They recently discovered significant new oil reserves, and we can share American technology and know-how with them as they develop these resources.

But our best opportunities to enhance our energy security can be found in our own backyard -- because we boast one critical, renewable resource that the rest of the world can't match: American ingenuity. American ingenuity, American know-how.

To make ourselves more secure, to control our energy future, we're going to have to harness all of that ingenuity. It's a task we won't be finished with by the end of my presidency, or even by the end of the next presidency. But if we continue the work that we've already begun over the last two years, we won't just spark new jobs, industries and innovations -- we will leave your generation and future generations with a country that is safer, that is healthier, and that's more prosperous.

So today, my administration is releasing a Blueprint for a Secure Energy Future that outlines a comprehensive national energy policy, one that we've been pursuing since the day I took office. And cutting our oil dependence by a third is part of that plan.

Here at Georgetown, I'd like to talk in broad strokes about how we can achieve these goals.

Now, meeting the goal of cutting our oil dependence depends largely on two things: first, finding and producing more oil at home; second, reducing our overall dependence on oil with cleaner alternative fuels and greater efficiency.

This begins by continuing to increase America's oil supply. Even for those of you who are interested in seeing a reduction in our dependence on fossil fuels -- and I know how passionate young people are about issues like climate change -- the fact of the matter is, is

that for quite some time, America is going to be still dependent on oil in making its economy work.

Now, last year, American oil production reached its highest level since 2003. And for the first time in more than a decade, oil we imported accounted for less than half of the liquid fuel we consumed. So that was a good trend. To keep reducing that reliance on imports, my administration is encouraging offshore oil exploration and production -- as long as it's safe and responsible.

I don't think anybody here has forgotten what happened last year, where we had to deal with the largest oil spill in [our] history. I know some of the fishermen down in the Gulf Coast haven't forgotten it. And what we learned from that disaster helped us put in place smarter standards of safety and responsibility. For example, if you're going to drill in deepwater, you've got to prove before you start drilling that you can actually contain an underwater spill. That's just common sense. And lately, we've been hearing folks saying, well, the Obama administration, they put restrictions on how oil companies operate offshore. Well, yes, because we just spent all that time, energy and money trying to clean up a big mess. And I don't know about you, but I don't have amnesia. I remember these things. (Laughter.) And I think it was important for us to make sure that we prevent something like that from happening again. (Applause.)

Now, today, we're working to expedite new drilling permits for companies that meet these higher standards. Since they were put in, we've approved 39 new shallow-water permits; we've approved seven deepwater permits in recent weeks. When it comes to drilling offshore, my administration approved more than two permits last year for every new well that the industry started to drill. So any claim that my administration is responsible for gas prices because we've "shut down" oil production, any claim like that is simply untrue. It might make for a useful sound bite, but it doesn't track with reality.

What is true is we've said if you're going to drill offshore you've got to have a plan to make sure that we don't have the kind of catastrophe that we had last year. And I don't think

that there's anybody who should dispute that that's the right strategy to pursue.

Moreover, we're actually pushing the oil industry to take advantage of the opportunities that they've already got. Right now the industry holds tens of millions of acres of leases where they're not producing a single drop. They're just sitting on supplies of American energy that are ready to be tapped. That's why part of our plan is to provide new and better incentives that promote rapid, responsible development of these resources.

We're also exploring and assessing new frontiers for oil and gas development from Alaska to the Mid- and South Atlantic states, because producing more oil in America can help lower oil prices, can help create jobs, and can enhance our energy security, but we've got to do it in the right way.

Now, even if we increase domestic oil production, that is not going to be the long-term solution to our energy challenge. I give out this statistic all the time, and forgive me for repeating it again: America holds about 2 percent of the world's proven oil reserves. What that means is, is that even if we drilled every drop of oil out of every single one of the reserves that we possess -- offshore and onshore -- it still wouldn't be enough to meet our long-term needs. We consume about 25 percent of the world's oil. We only have 2 percent of the reserves. Even if we doubled U.S. oil production, we're still really short.

So the only way for America's energy supply to be truly secure is by permanently reducing our dependence on oil. We're going to have to find ways to boost our efficiency so we use less oil. We've got to discover and produce cleaner, renewable sources of energy that also produce less carbon pollution, which is threatening our climate. And we've got to do it quickly.

Now, in terms of new sources of energy, we have a few different options. The first is natural gas. Recent innovations have given us the opportunity to tap large reserves -- perhaps a century's worth of reserves, a hundred years worth of reserves -- in the shale under our feet. But just as is true in terms of us extracting oil from the ground, we've got to make sure that we're extracting natural gas safely, without polluting our water supply.

That's why I've asked Secretary Chu, my Energy Secretary, to work with other agencies, the natural gas industry, states, and environmental experts to improve the safety of this process. And Chu is the right guy to do this. He's got a Nobel Prize in physics. He actually deserved his Nobel Prize. (Laughter and applause.) And this is the kind of thing that he likes to do for fun on the weekend. (Laughter.) He goes into his garage and he tinkers around and figures out how to extract natural gas. (Laughter.)

I'm going to embarrass him further. (Laughter.) Last year, when we were trying to fill - figure out how to close the cap, I sent Chu down to sit in the BP offices, and he essentially designed the cap that ultimately worked, and he drew up the specs for it and had BP build it, construct it. So this is somebody who knows what he's doing. (Applause.) So for those of you who are studying physics, it may actually pay off someday. (Laughter.)

But the potential for natural gas is enormous. And this is an area where there's actually been some broad bipartisan agreement. Last year, more than 150 members of Congress from both sides of the aisle produced legislation providing incentives to use clean-burning natural gas in our vehicles instead of oil. And that's a big deal. Getting 150 members of Congress to agree on anything is a big deal. And they were even joined by T. Boone Pickens, a businessman who made his fortune on oil, but who is out there making the simple point that we can't simply drill our way out of our energy problems.

So I ask members of Congress and all the interested parties involved to keep at it, pass a bill that helps us achieve the goal of extracting natural gas in a safe, environmentally sound way.

Now, another substitute for oil that holds tremendous promise is renewable biofuels — not just ethanol, but biofuels made from things like switchgrass and wood chips and biomass.

If anybody doubts the potential of these fuels, consider Brazil. As I said, I was just there last week. Half of Brazil's vehicles can run on biofuels -- half of their fleet of automobiles can run on biofuels instead of petroleum. Just last week, our Air Force -- our own Air Force -

- used an advanced biofuel blend to fly a Raptor 22 -- an F-22 Raptor faster than the speed of sound. Think about that. I mean, if an F-22 Raptor can fly at the speed of -- faster than the speed of sound on biomass, then I know the old beater that you've got, that you're driving around in -- (laughter) -- can probably do so, too. There's no reason why we can't have our cars do the same.

In fact, the Air Force is aiming to get half of its domestic jet fuel from alternative sources by 2016. And I'm directing the Navy and the Department of Energy and Agriculture to work with the private sector to create advanced biofuels that can power not just fighter jets, but also trucks and commercial airliners.

So there's no reason we shouldn't be using these renewable fuels throughout America. And that's why we're investing in things like fueling stations and research into the next generation of biofuels. One of the biggest problems we have with alternative energy is not just producing the energy, but also distributing it. We've got gas stations all around the country, so whenever you need gas you know you can fill up -- it doesn't matter where you are. Well, we've got to have that same kind of distribution network when it comes to our renewable energy sources so that when you are converting to a different kind of car that runs on a different kind of energy, you're going to be able to have that same convenience. Otherwise, the market won't work; it won't grow.

Over the next two years, we'll help entrepreneurs break ground for four next-generation biorefineries -- each with a capacity of more than 20 million gallons per year. And going forward, we should look for ways to reform biofuels incentives to make sure that they're meeting today's challenges and that they're also saving taxpayers money.

So as we replace oil with fuels like natural gas and biofuels, we can also reduce our dependence by making cars and trucks that use less oil in the first place. Seventy percent of our petroleum consumption goes to transportation -- 70 percent. And by the way, so does the second biggest chunk of most families' budgets goes into transportation. And that's why one of the best ways to make our economy less dependent on oil and save folks more money is to

make our transportation sector more efficient.

Now, we went through 30 years where we didn't raise fuel efficiency standards on cars. And part of what happened in the U.S. auto industry was because oil appeared relatively cheap, the U.S. auto industry decided we're just going to make our money on SUVs, and we're not going to worry about fuel efficiency. Thirty years of lost time when it comes to technology that could improve the efficiency of cars.

So last year, we established a groundbreaking national fuel efficiency standard for cars and trucks. We did this last year without legislation. We just got all the parties together and we got them to agree -- automakers, autoworkers, environmental groups, industry.

So that means our cars will be getting better gas mileage, saving 1.8 billion barrels of oil over the life of the program -- 1.8 billion. Our consumers will save money from fewer trips to the pump -- \$3,000 on average over time you will save because of these higher fuel efficiency standards. And our automakers will build more innovative products. Right now, there are even cars rolling off the assembly lines in Detroit with combustion engines -- I'm not talking about hybrids -- combustion engines that get more than 50 miles per gallon. So we know how to do it. We know how to make our cars more efficient.

But going forward, we're going to continue to work with the automakers, with the autoworkers, with states, to ensure the high-quality, fuel-efficient cars and trucks of tomorrow are built right here in the United States of America. That's going to be a top priority for us. (Applause.)

This summer, we're going to propose the first-ever fuel efficiency standards for heavy-duty trucks. And this fall, we'll announce the next round of fuel standards for cars that builds on what we've already done.

And by the way, the federal government is going to need to lead by example. The fleet of cars and trucks we use in the federal government is one of the largest in the country.

We've got a lot of cars. And that's why we've already doubled the number of alternative vehicles in the federal fleet. And that's why today I am directing agencies to purchase 100 percent alternative fuel, hybrid, or electric vehicles by 2015. All of them should be alternative fuel. (Applause.)

Going forward, we'll partner with private companies that want to upgrade their large fleets. And this means, by the way, that you students, as consumers or future consumers of cars, you've got to make sure that you are boosting demand for alternative vehicles. You're going to have a responsibility as well, because if alternative-fuel vehicles are manufactured but you guys aren't buying them, then folks will keep on making cars that don't have the same fuel efficiency. So you've got power in this process, and the decisions you make individually in your lives will say something about how serious we are when it comes to energy independence.

We've also made historic investments in high-speed rail and mass transit, because part of making our transportation sector cleaner and more efficient involves offering all Americans, whether they are urban, suburban, or rural, the choice to be mobile without having to get in a car and pay for gas.

Still, there are few breakthroughs as promising for increasing fuel efficiency and reducing our dependence on oil as electric vehicles. Soon after I took office, I set a goal of having one million electric vehicles on our roads by 2015. We've created incentives for American companies to develop these vehicles, and for Americans who want them to buy them.

So new manufacturing plants are opening over the next few years. And a modest \$2 billion investment in competitive grants for companies to develop the next generation of batteries for these cars has jumpstarted a big new American industry. Pretty soon, America will be home to 40 percent of global manufacturing capacity for these advanced batteries.

And for those of you who are wondering what that means, the thing that's been holding

back electric vehicles is the battery that stores that electricity, that energy. And the more efficient, the more lightweight we can make those batteries, the easier it is to manufacture those cars at a competitive price.

And if we can have that industry here in the United States of America, that means jobs. If those batteries are made here, the cars are made here. Those cars are made here, we're putting Americans back to work.

Now, to make sure we stay on this goal we're going to need to do more — by offering more powerful incentives to consumers, and by rewarding the communities that pave the way for the adoption of these vehicles.

Now, one other thing about electric cars -- and you don't need to talk to Chu about this -- it turns out electric cars run on electricity. (Laughter.) And so even if we reduce our oil dependency, and we're producing all these great electric cars, we're going to have to have a plan to change the way we generate electricity in America so that it's cleaner and safer and healthier. We know that ushering in a clean energy economy has the potential of creating untold numbers of new jobs and new businesses right here in the United States. But we're going to have to think about how do we produce electricity more efficiently.

Now, in addition to producing it, we actually also have to think about making sure we're not wasting energy. I don't know how we're doing on the Georgetown campus, Mr. President, but every institution and every household has to start thinking about how are we reducing the amount of energy that we're using and doing it in more efficient ways.

Today, our homes and businesses consume 40 percent of the energy that we use, and it costs us billions of dollars in energy bills. Manufacturers that require large amounts of energy to make their products, they're challenged by rising energy costs. And so you can't separate the issue of oil dependence from the issue of how we are producing generally -- more energy generally.

And that's why we've proposed new programs to help Americans upgrade their homes and businesses and plants with new, energy-efficient building materials -- new lighting, new windows, new heating and cooling systems -- investments that will save consumers and business owners tens of billions of dollars a year, and free up money for investment and hiring and creating new jobs and hiring more workers and putting contractors to work as well.

The nice thing about energy efficiency is we already have the technology. We don't have to create something new. We just have to help businesses and homeowners put in place the installation, the energy-efficient windows, the energy-efficient lighting. They'll get their money back. You will save money on your electricity bill that pays for those improvements that you made, but a lot of people may not have the money up front, and so we've got to give them some incentives to do that.

And just like the fuels we use in our cars, we're going to have to find cleaner renewable sources of electricity. Today, about two-fifths of our electricity come from clean energy sources. But we can do better than that. I think that with the right incentives in place, we can double our use of clean energy. And that's why, in my State of the Union address back in January, I called for a new Clean Energy Standard for America: By 2035, 80 percent of our electricity needs to come from a wide range of clean energy sources -- renewables like wind and solar, efficient natural gas. And, yes, we're going to have to examine how do we make clean coal and nuclear power work.

Now, in light of the ongoing events in Japan, I want to just take a minute to talk about nuclear power. Right now, America gets about one-fifth of our electricity from nuclear energy. And it's important to recognize that nuclear energy doesn't emit carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. So those of us who are concerned about climate change, we've got to recognize that nuclear power, if it's safe, can make a significant contribution to the climate change question.

And I'm determined to ensure that it's safe. So in light of what's happened in Japan,

I've requested a comprehensive safety review by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission to make sure that all of our existing nuclear energy facilities are safe. And we're going to incorporate those conclusions and lessons from Japan in design and the building of the next generation of plants. But we can't simply take it off the table.

My administration is leading global discussions towards a new international framework in which all countries who are operating nuclear plants are making sure that they're not spreading dangerous nuclear materials and technology.

But more broadly, a clean energy standard can expand the scope of clean energy investments because what it does is it gives cutting-edge companies the certainty that they need to invest. Essentially what it does is it says to companies, you know what, you will have a customer if you're producing clean energy. Utilities, they need to buy a certain amount of clean energy in their overall portfolio, and that means that innovators are willing to make those big capital investments.

And we've got to start now because -- think about this -- in the 1980s, America was home to more than 80 percent of the world's wind capacity, 90 percent of the world's solar capacity. We were the leaders in wind. We were the leaders in solar. We owned the clean energy economy in the '80s. Guess what. Today, China has the most wind capacity. Germany has the most solar capacity. Both invest more in clean energy than we do, even though we are a larger economy and a substantially larger user of energy. We've fallen behind on what is going to be the key to our future.

Other countries are now exporting technology we pioneered and they're going after the jobs that come with it because they know that the countries that lead the 21st century clean energy economy will be the countries that lead the 21st century global economy.

I want America to be that nation. I want America to win the future. (Applause.)

So a clean energy standard will help drive private investment in innovation. But I want

to make this point: Government funding will still be critical. Over the past two years, the historic investments my administration has made in clean and renewable energy research and technology have helped private sector companies grow and hire hundreds of thousands of new workers.

I've visited gleaming new solar arrays that are among the largest in the world. I've tested an electric vehicle fresh off the assembly line. I mean, I didn't really test it -- I was able to drive like five feet before Secret Service said to stop. (Laughter.) I've toured factories that used to be shuttered, where they're now building advanced wind blades that are as long as 747s, and they're building the towers that support them. And I've seen the scientists that are searching for the next big breakthrough in energy. None of this would have happened without government support.

I understand we've got a tight fiscal situation, so it's fair to ask how do we pay for government's investment in energy. And as we debate our national priorities and our budget in Congress, we're going to have to make some tough choices. We're going to have to cut what we don't need to invest in what we do need.

Unfortunately, some folks want to cut critical investments in clean energy. They want to cut our research and development into new technologies. They're shortchanging the resources necessary even to promptly issue new permits for offshore drilling. These cuts would eliminate thousands of private sector jobs; it would terminate scientists and engineers; it would end fellowships for researchers, some who may be here at Georgetown, graduate students and other talent that we desperately need to get into this area in the 21st century. That doesn't make sense.

We're already paying a price for our inaction. Every time we fill up at the pump, every time we lose a job or a business to countries that are investing more than we do in clean energy, when it comes to our air, our water, and the climate change that threatens the planet that you will inherit -- we're already paying a price. These are costs that we are already bearing. And if we do nothing, the price will only go up.

So at moments like these, sacrificing these investments in research and development, in supporting clean energy technologies, that would weaken our energy economy and make us more dependent on oil. That's not a game plan to win the future. That's a vision to keep us mired in the past. I will not accept that outcome for the United States of America. We are not going to do that. (Applause.)

Let me close by speaking directly to the students here -- the next generation who are going to be writing the next great chapter in the American story. The issue of energy independence is one that America has been talking about since before your parents were your age, since before you were born. And you also happen to go to a school [in a town] that for a long time has suffered from a chronic unwillingness to come together and make tough choices. And so I forgive you for thinking that maybe there isn't much we can do to rise to this challenge. Maybe some of you are feeling kind of cynical or skeptical about whether we're actually going to solve this problem. But everything I have seen and experienced with your generation convinces me otherwise.

I think that precisely because you are coming of age at a time of such rapid and sometimes unsettling change, born into a world with fewer walls, educated in an era of constant information, tempered by war and economic turmoil -- because that's the world in which you're coming of age, I think you believe as deeply as any of our previous generations that America can change and it can change for the better.

We need that. We need you to dream big. We need you to summon that same spirit of unbridled optimism and that bold willingness to tackle tough challenges and see those challenges through that led previous generations to rise to greatness -- to save a democracy, to touch the moon, to connect the world with our own science and our own imagination.

That's what America is capable of. That's what you have to push America to do, and it will be you that pushes it. That history of ours, of meeting challenges -- that's your birthright. You understand that there's no problem out there that is not within our power to solve.

I don't want to leave this challenge for future Presidents. I don't want to leave it for my children. I don't want to leave it for your children. So, yes, solving it will take time and it will take effort. It will require our brightest scientists, our most creative companies. It will require all of us — Democrats, Republicans, and everybody in between — to do our part. But with confidence in America and in ourselves and in one another, I know this is a challenge that we will solve.

Thank you very much, everybody. God bless you. God bless the United States of America. (Applause.)

A.8 Transcription du texte 8

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Vice President, members of Congress, distinguished guests, and fellow Americans:

Last month, I went to Andrews Air Force Base and welcomed home some of our last troops to serve in Iraq. Together, we offered a final, proud salute to the colors under which more than a million of our fellow citizens fought -- and several thousand gave their lives.

We gather tonight knowing that this generation of heroes has made the United States safer and more respected around the world. (Applause.) For the first time in nine years, there are no Americans fighting in Iraq. (Applause.) For the first time in two decades, Osama bin Laden is not a threat to this country. (Applause.) Most of al Qaeda's top lieutenants have been defeated. The Taliban's momentum has been broken, and some troops in Afghanistan have begun to come home.

These achievements are a testament to the courage, selflessness and teamwork of America's Armed Forces. At a time when too many of our institutions have let us down, they exceed all expectations. They're not consumed with personal ambition. They don't obsess over their differences. They focus on the mission at hand. They work together.

Imagine what we could accomplish if we followed their example. (Applause.) Think about the America within our reach: A country that leads the world in educating its people. An America that attracts a new generation of high-tech manufacturing and high-paying jobs. A future where we're in control of our own energy, and our security and prosperity aren't so tied to unstable parts of the world. An economy built to last, where hard work pays off, and responsibility is rewarded.

We can do this. I know we can, because we've done it before. At the end of World War II, when another generation of heroes returned home from combat, they built the strongest economy and middle class the world has ever known. (Applause.) My grandfather, a veteran of Patton's Army, got the chance to go to college on the GI Bill. My grandmother, who worked on a bomber assembly line, was part of a workforce that turned out the best products on Earth.

The two of them shared the optimism of a nation that had triumphed over a depression and fascism. They understood they were part of something larger; that they were contributing to a story of success that every American had a chance to share -- the basic American promise that if you worked hard, you could do well enough to raise a family, own a home, send your kids to college, and put a little away for retirement.

The defining issue of our time is how to keep that promise alive. No challenge is more urgent. No debate is more important. We can either settle for a country where a shrinking number of people do really well while a growing number of Americans barely get by, or we can restore an economy where everyone gets a fair shot, and everyone does their fair share, and everyone plays by the same set of rules. (Applause.) What's at stake aren't Democratic values or Republican values, but American values. And we have to reclaim them.

Let's remember how we got here. Long before the recession, jobs and manufacturing began leaving our shores. Technology made businesses more efficient, but also made some jobs obsolete. Folks at the top saw their incomes rise like never before, but most hardworking Americans struggled with costs that were growing, paychecks that weren't, and

personal debt that kept piling up.

In 2008, the house of cards collapsed. We learned that mortgages had been sold to people who couldn't afford or understand them. Banks had made huge bets and bonuses with other people's money. Regulators had looked the other way, or didn't have the authority to stop the bad behavior.

It was wrong. It was irresponsible. And it plunged our economy into a crisis that put millions out of work, saddled us with more debt, and left innocent, hardworking Americans holding the bag. In the six months before I took office, we lost nearly 4 million jobs. And we lost another 4 million before our policies were in full effect.

Those are the facts. But so are these: In the last 22 months, businesses have created more than 3 million jobs. (Applause.)

Last year, they created the most jobs since 2005. American manufacturers are hiring again, creating jobs for the first time since the late 1990s. Together, we've agreed to cut the deficit by more than \$2 trillion. And we've put in place new rules to hold Wall Street accountable, so a crisis like this never happens again. (Applause.)

The state of our Union is getting stronger. And we've come too far to turn back now. As long as I'm President, I will work with anyone in this chamber to build on this momentum. But I intend to fight obstruction with action, and I will oppose any effort to return to the very same policies that brought on this economic crisis in the first place. (Applause.)

No, we will not go back to an economy weakened by outsourcing, bad debt, and phony financial profits. Tonight, I want to speak about how we move forward, and lay out a blueprint for an economy that's built to last — an economy built on American manufacturing, American energy, skills for American workers, and a renewal of American values.

Now, this blueprint begins with American manufacturing.

On the day I took office, our auto industry was on the verge of collapse. Some even said we should let it die. With a million jobs at stake, I refused to let that happen. In exchange for help, we demanded responsibility. We got workers and automakers to settle their differences. We got the industry to retool and restructure. Today, General Motors is back on top as the world's number-one automaker. (Applause.) Chrysler has grown faster in the U.S. than any major car company. Ford is investing billions in U.S. plants and factories. And together, the entire industry added nearly 160,000 jobs.

We bet on American workers. We bet on American ingenuity. And tonight, the American auto industry is back. (Applause.)

What's happening in Detroit can happen in other industries. It can happen in Cleveland and Pittsburgh and Raleigh. We can't bring every job back that's left our shore. But right now, it's getting more expensive to do business in places like China. Meanwhile, America is more productive. A few weeks ago, the CEO of Master Lock told me that it now makes business sense for him to bring jobs back home. (Applause.) Today, for the first time in 15 years, Master Lock's unionized plant in Milwaukee is running at full capacity. (Applause.)

So we have a huge opportunity, at this moment, to bring manufacturing back. But we have to seize it. Tonight, my message to business leaders is simple: Ask yourselves what you can do to bring jobs back to your country, and your country will do everything we can to help you succeed. (Applause.)

We should start with our tax code. Right now, companies get tax breaks for moving jobs and profits overseas. Meanwhile, companies that choose to stay in America get hit with one of the highest tax rates in the world. It makes no sense, and everyone knows it. So let's change it.

First, if you're a business that wants to outsource jobs, you shouldn't get a tax deduction

for doing it. (Applause.) That money should be used to cover moving expenses for companies like Master Lock that decide to bring jobs home. (Applause.)

Second, no American company should be able to avoid paying its fair share of taxes by moving jobs and profits overseas. (Applause.) From now on, every multinational company should have to pay a basic minimum tax. And every penny should go towards lowering taxes for companies that choose to stay here and hire here in America. (Applause.)

Third, if you're an American manufacturer, you should get a bigger tax cut. If you're a high-tech manufacturer, we should double the tax deduction you get for making your products here. And if you want to relocate in a community that was hit hard when a factory left town, you should get help financing a new plant, equipment, or training for new workers. (Applause.)

So my message is simple. It is time to stop rewarding businesses that ship jobs overseas, and start rewarding companies that create jobs right here in America. Send me these tax reforms, and I will sign them right away. (Applause.)

We're also making it easier for American businesses to sell products all over the world. Two years ago, I set a goal of doubling U.S. exports over five years. With the bipartisan trade agreements we signed into law, we're on track to meet that goal ahead of schedule. (Applause.) And soon, there will be millions of new customers for American goods in Panama, Colombia, and South Korea. Soon, there will be new cars on the streets of Seoul imported from Detroit, and Toledo, and Chicago. (Applause.)

I will go anywhere in the world to open new markets for American products. And I will not stand by when our competitors don't play by the rules. We've brought trade cases against China at nearly twice the rate as the last administration — and it's made a difference. (Applause.) Over a thousand Americans are working today because we stopped a surge in Chinese tires. But we need to do more. It's not right when another country lets our movies, music, and software be pirated. It's not fair when foreign manufacturers have a leg up on

ours only because they're heavily subsidized.

Tonight, I'm announcing the creation of a Trade Enforcement Unit that will be charged with investigating unfair trading practices in countries like China. (Applause.) There will be more inspections to prevent counterfeit or unsafe goods from crossing our borders. And this Congress should make sure that no foreign company has an advantage over American manufacturing when it comes to accessing financing or new markets like Russia. Our workers are the most productive on Earth, and if the playing field is level, I promise you — America will always win. (Applause.)

I also hear from many business leaders who want to hire in the United States but can't find workers with the right skills. Growing industries in science and technology have twice as many openings as we have workers who can do the job. Think about that — openings at a time when millions of Americans are looking for work. It's inexcusable. And we know how to fix it.

Jackie Bray is a single mom from North Carolina who was laid off from her job as a mechanic. Then Siemens opened a gas turbine factory in Charlotte, and formed a partnership with Central Piedmont Community College. The company helped the college design courses in laser and robotics training. It paid Jackie's tuition, then hired her to help operate their plant.

I want every American looking for work to have the same opportunity as Jackie did. Join me in a national commitment to train 2 million Americans with skills that will lead directly to a job. (Applause.) My administration has already lined up more companies that want to help. Model partnerships between businesses like Siemens and community colleges in places like Charlotte, and Orlando, and Louisville are up and running. Now you need to give more community colleges the resources they need to become community career centers — places that teach people skills that businesses are looking for right now, from data management to high-tech manufacturing.

And I want to cut through the maze of confusing training programs, so that from now on, people like Jackie have one program, one website, and one place to go for all the information and help that they need. It is time to turn our unemployment system into a reemployment system that puts people to work. (Applause.)

These reforms will help people get jobs that are open today. But to prepare for the jobs of tomorrow, our commitment to skills and education has to start earlier.

For less than 1 percent of what our nation spends on education each year, we've convinced nearly every state in the country to raise their standards for teaching and learning - the first time that's happened in a generation.

But challenges remain. And we know how to solve them.

At a time when other countries are doubling down on education, tight budgets have forced states to lay off thousands of teachers. We know a good teacher can increase the lifetime income of a classroom by over \$250,000. A great teacher can offer an escape from poverty to the child who dreams beyond his circumstance. Every person in this chamber can point to a teacher who changed the trajectory of their lives. Most teachers work tirelessly, with modest pay, sometimes digging into their own pocket for school supplies -- just to make a difference.

Teachers matter. So instead of bashing them, or defending the status quo, let's offer schools a deal. Give them the resources to keep good teachers on the job, and reward the best ones. (Applause.) And in return, grant schools flexibility: to teach with creativity and passion; to stop teaching to the test; and to replace teachers who just aren't helping kids learn. That's a bargain worth making. (Applause.)

We also know that when students don't walk away from their education, more of them walk the stage to get their diploma. When students are not allowed to drop out, they do better. So tonight, I am proposing that every state -- every state -- requires that all students

stay in high school until they graduate or turn 18. (Applause.)

When kids do graduate, the most daunting challenge can be the cost of college. At a time when Americans owe more in tuition debt than credit card debt, this Congress needs to stop the interest rates on student loans from doubling in July. (Applause.)

Extend the tuition tax credit we started that saves millions of middle-class families thousands of dollars, and give more young people the chance to earn their way through college by doubling the number of work-study jobs in the next five years. (Applause.)

Of course, it's not enough for us to increase student aid. We can't just keep subsidizing skyrocketing tuition; we'll run out of money. States also need to do their part, by making higher education a higher priority in their budgets. And colleges and universities have to do their part by working to keep costs down.

Recently, I spoke with a group of college presidents who've done just that. Some schools redesign courses to help students finish more quickly. Some use better technology. The point is, it's possible. So let me put colleges and universities on notice: If you can't stop tuition from going up, the funding you get from taxpayers will go down. (Applause.) Higher education can't be a luxury — it is an economic imperative that every family in America should be able to afford.

Let's also remember that hundreds of thousands of talented, hardworking students in this country face another challenge: the fact that they aren't yet American citizens. Many were brought here as small children, are American through and through, yet they live every day with the threat of deportation. Others came more recently, to study business and science and engineering, but as soon as they get their degree, we send them home to invent new products and create new jobs somewhere else.

That doesn't make sense.

I believe as strongly as ever that we should take on illegal immigration. That's why my administration has put more boots on the border than ever before. That's why there are fewer illegal crossings than when I took office. The opponents of action are out of excuses. We should be working on comprehensive immigration reform right now. (Applause.)

But if election-year politics keeps Congress from acting on a comprehensive plan, let's at least agree to stop expelling responsible young people who want to staff our labs, start new businesses, defend this country. Send me a law that gives them the chance to earn their citizenship. I will sign it right away. (Applause.)

You see, an economy built to last is one where we encourage the talent and ingenuity of every person in this country. That means women should earn equal pay for equal work. (Applause.) It means we should support everyone who's willing to work, and every risk-taker and entrepreneur who aspires to become the next Steve Jobs.

After all, innovation is what America has always been about. Most new jobs are created in start-ups and small businesses. So let's pass an agenda that helps them succeed. Tear down regulations that prevent aspiring entrepreneurs from getting the financing to grow. (Applause.) Expand tax relief to small businesses that are raising wages and creating good jobs. Both parties agree on these ideas. So put them in a bill, and get it on my desk this year. (Applause.)

Innovation also demands basic research. Today, the discoveries taking place in our federally financed labs and universities could lead to new treatments that kill cancer cells but leave healthy ones untouched. New lightweight vests for cops and soldiers that can stop any bullet. Don't gut these investments in our budget. Don't let other countries win the race for the future. Support the same kind of research and innovation that led to the computer chip and the Internet; to new American jobs and new American industries.

And nowhere is the promise of innovation greater than in American-made energy. Over the last three years, we've opened millions of new acres for oil and gas exploration, and

tonight, I'm directing my administration to open more than 75 percent of our potential offshore oil and gas resources. (Applause.) Right now -- right now -- American oil production is the highest that it's been in eight years. That's right -- eight years. Not only that -- last year, we relied less on foreign oil than in any of the past 16 years. (Applause.)

But with only 2 percent of the world's oil reserves, oil isn't enough. This country needs an all-out, all-of-the-above strategy that develops every available source of American energy. (Applause.) A strategy that's cleaner, cheaper, and full of new jobs.

We have a supply of natural gas that can last America nearly 100 years. (Applause.) And my administration will take every possible action to safely develop this energy. Experts believe this will support more than 600,000 jobs by the end of the decade. And I'm requiring all companies that drill for gas on public lands to disclose the chemicals they use. (Applause.) Because America will develop this resource without putting the health and safety of our citizens at risk.

The development of natural gas will create jobs and power trucks and factories that are cleaner and cheaper, proving that we don't have to choose between our environment and our economy. (Applause.) And by the way, it was public research dollars, over the course of 30 years, that helped develop the technologies to extract all this natural gas out of shale rock — reminding us that government support is critical in helping businesses get new energy ideas off the ground. (Applause.)

Now, what's true for natural gas is just as true for clean energy. In three years, our partnership with the private sector has already positioned America to be the world's leading manufacturer of high-tech batteries. Because of federal investments, renewable energy use has nearly doubled, and thousands of Americans have jobs because of it.

When Bryan Ritterby was laid off from his job making furniture, he said he worried that at 55, no one would give him a second chance. But he found work at Energetx, a wind turbine manufacturer in Michigan. Before the recession, the factory only made luxury

yachts. Today, it's hiring workers like Bryan, who said, "I'm proud to be working in the industry of the future."

Our experience with shale gas, our experience with natural gas, shows us that the payoffs on these public investments don't always come right away. Some technologies don't pan out; some companies fail. But I will not walk away from the promise of clean energy. I will not walk away from workers like Bryan. (Applause.) I will not cede the wind or solar or battery industry to China or Germany because we refuse to make the same commitment here.

We've subsidized oil companies for a century. That's long enough. (Applause.) It's time to end the taxpayer giveaways to an industry that rarely has been more profitable, and double-down on a clean energy industry that never has been more promising. Pass clean energy tax credits. Create these jobs. (Applause.)

We can also spur energy innovation with new incentives. The differences in this chamber may be too deep right now to pass a comprehensive plan to fight climate change. But there's no reason why Congress shouldn't at least set a clean energy standard that creates a market for innovation. So far, you haven't acted. Well, tonight, I will. I'm directing my administration to allow the development of clean energy on enough public land to power 3 million homes. And I'm proud to announce that the Department of Defense, working with us, the world's largest consumer of energy, will make one of the largest commitments to clean energy in history — with the Navy purchasing enough capacity to power a quarter of a million homes a year. (Applause.)

Of course, the easiest way to save money is to waste less energy. So here's a proposal: Help manufacturers eliminate energy waste in their factories and give businesses incentives to upgrade their buildings. Their energy bills will be \$100 billion lower over the next decade, and America will have less pollution, more manufacturing, more jobs for construction workers who need them. Send me a bill that creates these jobs. (Applause.)

Building this new energy future should be just one part of a broader agenda to repair

America's infrastructure. So much of America needs to be rebuilt. We've got crumbling roads and bridges; a power grid that wastes too much energy; an incomplete high-speed broadband network that prevents a small business owner in rural America from selling her products all over the world.

During the Great Depression, America built the Hoover Dam and the Golden Gate Bridge. After World War II, we connected our states with a system of highways. Democratic and Republican administrations invested in great projects that benefited everybody, from the workers who built them to the businesses that still use them today.

In the next few weeks, I will sign an executive order clearing away the red tape that slows down too many construction projects. But you need to fund these projects. Take the money we're no longer spending at war, use half of it to pay down our debt, and use the rest to do some nation-building right here at home. (Applause.)

There's never been a better time to build, especially since the construction industry was one of the hardest hit when the housing bubble burst. Of course, construction workers weren't the only ones who were hurt. So were millions of innocent Americans who've seen their home values decline. And while government can't fix the problem on its own, responsible homeowners shouldn't have to sit and wait for the housing market to hit bottom to get some relief.

And that's why I'm sending this Congress a plan that gives every responsible homeowner the chance to save about \$3,000 a year on their mortgage, by refinancing at historically low rates. (Applause.) No more red tape. No more runaround from the banks. A small fee on the largest financial institutions will ensure that it won't add to the deficit and will give those banks that were rescued by taxpayers a chance to repay a deficit of trust. (Applause.)

Let's never forget: Millions of Americans who work hard and play by the rules every day deserve a government and a financial system that do the same. It's time to apply the

same rules from top to bottom. No bailouts, no handouts, and no copouts. An America built to last insists on responsibility from everybody.

We've all paid the price for lenders who sold mortgages to people who couldn't afford them, and buyers who knew they couldn't afford them. That's why we need smart regulations to prevent irresponsible behavior. (Applause.) Rules to prevent financial fraud or toxic dumping or faulty medical devices -- these don't destroy the free market. They make the free market work better.

There's no question that some regulations are outdated, unnecessary, or too costly. In fact, I've approved fewer regulations in the first three years of my presidency than my Republican predecessor did in his. (Applause.) I've ordered every federal agency to eliminate rules that don't make sense. We've already announced over 500 reforms, and just a fraction of them will save business and citizens more than \$10 billion over the next five years. We got rid of one rule from 40 years ago that could have forced some dairy farmers to spend \$10,000 a year proving that they could contain a spill -- because milk was somehow classified as an oil. With a rule like that, I guess it was worth crying over spilled milk. (Laughter and applause.)

Now, I'm confident a farmer can contain a milk spill without a federal agency looking over his shoulder. (Applause.) Absolutely. But I will not back down from making sure an oil company can contain the kind of oil spill we saw in the Gulf two years ago. (Applause.) I will not back down from protecting our kids from mercury poisoning, or making sure that our food is safe and our water is clean. I will not go back to the days when health insurance companies had unchecked power to cancel your policy, deny your coverage, or charge women differently than men. (Applause.)

And I will not go back to the days when Wall Street was allowed to play by its own set of rules. The new rules we passed restore what should be any financial system's core purpose: Getting funding to entrepreneurs with the best ideas, and getting loans to responsible families who want to buy a home, or start a business, or send their kids to

college.

So if you are a big bank or financial institution, you're no longer allowed to make risky bets with your customers' deposits. You're required to write out a "living will" that details exactly how you'll pay the bills if you fail — because the rest of us are not bailing you out ever again. (Applause.) And if you're a mortgage lender or a payday lender or a credit card company, the days of signing people up for products they can't afford with confusing forms and deceptive practices -- those days are over. Today, American consumers finally have a watchdog in Richard Cordray with one job: To look out for them. (Applause.)

We'll also establish a Financial Crimes Unit of highly trained investigators to crack down on large-scale fraud and protect people's investments. Some financial firms violate major anti-fraud laws because there's no real penalty for being a repeat offender. That's bad for consumers, and it's bad for the vast majority of bankers and financial service professionals who do the right thing. So pass legislation that makes the penalties for fraud count.

And tonight, I'm asking my Attorney General to create a special unit of federal prosecutors and leading state attorney general to expand our investigations into the abusive lending and packaging of risky mortgages that led to the housing crisis. (Applause.) This new unit will hold accountable those who broke the law, speed assistance to homeowners, and help turn the page on an era of recklessness that hurt so many Americans.

Now, a return to the American values of fair play and shared responsibility will help protect our people and our economy. But it should also guide us as we look to pay down our debt and invest in our future.

Right now, our most immediate priority is stopping a tax hike on 160 million working Americans while the recovery is still fragile. (Applause.) People cannot afford losing \$40 out of each paycheck this year. There are plenty of ways to get this done. So let's agree right here, right now: No side issues. No drama. Pass the payroll tax cut without delay. Let's get

it done. (Applause.)

When it comes to the deficit, we've already agreed to more than \$2 trillion in cuts and savings. But we need to do more, and that means making choices. Right now, we're poised to spend nearly \$1 trillion more on what was supposed to be a temporary tax break for the wealthiest 2 percent of Americans. Right now, because of loopholes and shelters in the tax code, a quarter of all millionaires pay lower tax rates than millions of middle-class households. Right now, Warren Buffett pays a lower tax rate than his secretary.

Do we want to keep these tax cuts for the wealthiest Americans? Or do we want to keep our investments in everything else — like education and medical research; a strong military and care for our veterans? Because if we're serious about paying down our debt, we can't do both.

The American people know what the right choice is. So do I. As I told the Speaker this summer, I'm prepared to make more reforms that rein in the long-term costs of Medicare and Medicaid, and strengthen Social Security, so long as those programs remain a guarantee of security for seniors.

But in return, we need to change our tax code so that people like me, and an awful lot of members of Congress, pay our fair share of taxes. (Applause.)

Tax reform should follow the Buffett Rule. If you make more than \$1 million a year, you should not pay less than 30 percent in taxes. And my Republican friend Tom Coburn is right: Washington should stop subsidizing millionaires. In fact, if you're earning a million dollars a year, you shouldn't get special tax subsidies or deductions. On the other hand, if you make under \$250,000 a year, like 98 percent of American families, your taxes shouldn't go up. (Applause.) You're the ones struggling with rising costs and stagnant wages. You're the ones who need relief.

Now, you can call this class warfare all you want. But asking a billionaire to pay at least

as much as his secretary in taxes? Most Americans would call that common sense.

We don't begrudge financial success in this country. We admire it. When Americans talk about folks like me paying my fair share of taxes, it's not because they envy the rich. It's because they understand that when I get a tax break I don't need and the country can't afford, it either adds to the deficit, or somebody else has to make up the difference -- like a senior on a fixed income, or a student trying to get through school, or a family trying to make ends meet. That's not right. Americans know that's not right. They know that this generation's success is only possible because past generations felt a responsibility to each other, and to the future of their country, and they know our way of life will only endure if we feel that same sense of shared responsibility. That's how we'll reduce our deficit. That's an America built to last. (Applause.)

Now, I recognize that people watching tonight have differing views about taxes and debt, energy and health care. But no matter what party they belong to, I bet most Americans are thinking the same thing right about now: Nothing will get done in Washington this year, or next year, or maybe even the year after that, because Washington is broken.

Can you blame them for feeling a little cynical?

The greatest blow to our confidence in our economy last year didn't come from events beyond our control. It came from a debate in Washington over whether the United States would pay its bills or not. Who benefited from that fiasco?

I've talked tonight about the deficit of trust between Main Street and Wall Street. But the divide between this city and the rest of the country is at least as bad -- and it seems to get worse every year.

Some of this has to do with the corrosive influence of money in politics. So together, let's take some steps to fix that. Send me a bill that bans insider trading by members of Congress; I will sign it tomorrow. (Applause.) Let's limit any elected official from owning

stocks in industries they impact. Let's make sure people who bundle campaign contributions for Congress can't lobby Congress, and vice versa -- an idea that has bipartisan support, at least outside of Washington.

Some of what's broken has to do with the way Congress does its business these days. A simple majority is no longer enough to get anything -- even routine business -- passed through the Senate. (Applause.) Neither party has been blameless in these tactics. Now both parties should put an end to it. (Applause.) For starters, I ask the Senate to pass a simple rule that all judicial and public service nominations receive a simple up or down vote within 90 days. (Applause.)

The executive branch also needs to change. Too often, it's inefficient, outdated and remote. (Applause.) That's why I've asked this Congress to grant me the authority to consolidate the federal bureaucracy, so that our government is leaner, quicker, and more responsive to the needs of the American people. (Applause.)

Finally, none of this can happen unless we also lower the temperature in this town. We need to end the notion that the two parties must be locked in a perpetual campaign of mutual destruction; that politics is about clinging to rigid ideologies instead of building consensus around common-sense ideas.

I'm a Democrat. But I believe what Republican Abraham Lincoln believed: That government should do for people only what they cannot do better by themselves, and no more. (Applause.) That's why my education reform offers more competition, and more control for schools and states. That's why we're getting rid of regulations that don't work. That's why our health care law relies on a reformed private market, not a government program.

On the other hand, even my Republican friends who complain the most about government spending have supported federally financed roads, and clean energy projects, and federal offices for the folks back home.

The point is, we should all want a smarter, more effective government. And while we may not be able to bridge our biggest philosophical differences this year, we can make real progress. With or without this Congress, I will keep taking actions that help the economy grow. But I can do a whole lot more with your help. Because when we act together, there's nothing the United States of America can't achieve. (Applause.) That's the lesson we've learned from our actions abroad over the last few years.

Ending the Iraq war has allowed us to strike decisive blows against our enemies. From Pakistan to Yemen, the al Qaeda operatives who remain are scrambling, knowing that they can't escape the reach of the United States of America. (Applause.)

From this position of strength, we've begun to wind down the war in Afghanistan. Ten thousand of our troops have come home. Twenty-three thousand more will leave by the end of this summer. This transition to Afghan lead will continue, and we will build an enduring partnership with Afghanistan, so that it is never again a source of attacks against America. (Applause.)

As the tide of war recedes, a wave of change has washed across the Middle East and North Africa, from Tunis to Cairo; from Sana'a to Tripoli. A year ago, Qaddafi was one of the world's longest-serving dictators — a murderer with American blood on his hands. Today, he is gone. And in Syria, I have no doubt that the Assad regime will soon discover that the forces of change cannot be reversed, and that human dignity cannot be denied. (Applause.)

How this incredible transformation will end remains uncertain. But we have a huge stake in the outcome. And while it's ultimately up to the people of the region to decide their fate, we will advocate for those values that have served our own country so well. We will stand against violence and intimidation. We will stand for the rights and dignity of all human beings — men and women; Christians, Muslims and Jews. We will support policies that lead to strong and stable democracies and open markets, because tyranny is no match for liberty.

And we will safeguard America's own security against those who threaten our citizens, our friends, and our interests. Look at Iran. Through the power of our diplomacy, a world that was once divided about how to deal with Iran's nuclear program now stands as one. The regime is more isolated than ever before; its leaders are faced with crippling sanctions, and as long as they shirk their responsibilities, this pressure will not relent.

Let there be no doubt: America is determined to prevent Iran from getting a nuclear weapon, and I will take no options off the table to achieve that goal. (Applause.)

But a peaceful resolution of this issue is still possible, and far better, and if Iran changes course and meets its obligations, it can rejoin the community of nations.

The renewal of American leadership can be felt across the globe. Our oldest alliances in Europe and Asia are stronger than ever. Our ties to the Americas are deeper. Our ironclad commitment -- and I mean ironclad -- to Israel's security has meant the closest military cooperation between our two countries in history. (Applause.)

We've made it clear that America is a Pacific power, and a new beginning in Burma has lit a new hope. From the coalitions we've built to secure nuclear materials, to the missions we've led against hunger and disease; from the blows we've dealt to our enemies, to the enduring power of our moral example, America is back.

Anyone who tells you otherwise, anyone who tells you that America is in decline or that our influence has waned, doesn't know what they're talking about. (Applause.)

That's not the message we get from leaders around the world who are eager to work with us. That's not how people feel from Tokyo to Berlin, from Cape Town to Rio, where opinions of America are higher than they've been in years. Yes, the world is changing. No, we can't control every event. But America remains the one indispensable nation in world affairs -- and as long as I'm President, I intend to keep it that way. (Applause.)

That's why, working with our military leaders, I've proposed a new defense strategy that ensures we maintain the finest military in the world, while saving nearly half a trillion dollars in our budget. To stay one step ahead of our adversaries, I've already sent this Congress legislation that will secure our country from the growing dangers of cyber-threats. (Applause.)

Above all, our freedom endures because of the men and women in uniform who defend it. (Applause.) As they come home, we must serve them as well as they've served us. That includes giving them the care and the benefits they have earned — which is why we've increased annual VA spending every year I've been President. (Applause.) And it means enlisting our veterans in the work of rebuilding our nation.

With the bipartisan support of this Congress, we're providing new tax credits to companies that hire vets. Michelle and Jill Biden have worked with American businesses to secure a pledge of 135,000 jobs for veterans and their families. And tonight, I'm proposing a Veterans Jobs Corps that will help our communities hire veterans as cops and firefighters, so that America is as strong as those who defend her. (Applause.)

Which brings me back to where I began. Those of us who've been sent here to serve can learn a thing or two from the service of our troops. When you put on that uniform, it doesn't matter if you're black or white; Asian, Latino, Native American; conservative, liberal; rich, poor; gay, straight. When you're marching into battle, you look out for the person next to you, or the mission fails. When you're in the thick of the fight, you rise or fall as one unit, serving one nation, leaving no one behind.

One of my proudest possessions is the flag that the SEAL Team took with them on the mission to get bin Laden. On it are each of their names. Some may be Democrats. Some may be Republicans. But that doesn't matter. Just like it didn't matter that day in the Situation Room, when I sat next to Bob Gates -- a man who was George Bush's defense secretary -- and Hillary Clinton -- a woman who ran against me for president.

All that mattered that day was the mission. No one thought about politics. No one thought about themselves. One of the young men involved in the raid later told me that he didn't deserve credit for the mission. It only succeeded, he said, because every single member of that unit did their job -- the pilot who landed the helicopter that spun out of control; the translator who kept others from entering the compound; the troops who separated the women and children from the fight; the SEALs who charged up the stairs. More than that, the mission only succeeded because every member of that unit trusted each other -- because you can't charge up those stairs, into darkness and danger, unless you know that there's somebody behind you, watching your back.

So it is with America. Each time I look at that flag, I'm reminded that our destiny is stitched together like those 50 stars and those 13 stripes. No one built this country on their own. This nation is great because we built it together. This nation is great because we worked as a team. This nation is great because we get each other's backs. And if we hold fast to that truth, in this moment of trial, there is no challenge too great; no mission too hard. As long as we are joined in common purpose, as long as we maintain our common resolve, our journey moves forward, and our future is hopeful, and the state of our Union will always be strong.

Thank you, God bless you, and God bless the United States of America. (Applause.)

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THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. (Applause.) Thank you so much. Thank you. Well, I am so -- what a wonderful reception. (Applause.) That is so nice. Thank you. You're all just cheering because I know Michelle. (Laughter.) Well, it is wonderful to be here. Folks who have a seat, feel free to take a seat.

I want to thank Roy for that introduction. He talks pretty smooth, right? (Laughter and applause.) It's great to be back in Maryland. It's great to be here at Prince George's Community College. (Applause.)

AUDIENCE MEMBER: We love you!

THE PRESIDENT: I love you back. (Applause.) Now, but before I start, I want to thank your other president, Dr. Charlene Dukes. (Applause.) Your Governor, Martin O'Malley, is in the house. (Applause.) Lieutenant Governor Brown is here. (Applause.) We've got one of the finest members of the United States Senate that you could hope to have in Ben Cardin. (Applause.) Congresswoman Donna Edwards is here. (Applause.) And County Executive Rushern Baker is here. (Applause.) And I want to thank all of you for coming out here today. (Applause.)

Now, I just finished learning about some of the work that you're doing here at this community college to make sure that homes are using less energy, and helping folks save money on their heating and their air-conditioning bills. And I was very impressed. I'm even more impressed because I know this program is giving a lot of people a chance to make a decent living -- everyone from veterans to folks with disabilities to folks who've just been down on their luck but want to work. So I want you to know how proud I am of this program, of this institution, of all of you. (Applause.)

The skills that you gain here at this community college will be the surest path to success in this economy. Because if there's one thing that we're thinking about a lot these days, is, first of all, how do we make sure that American workers have the skills and education they need to be able to succeed in this competitive global economy? And community colleges all across the country and all across Maryland are doing an outstanding job providing young people that first opportunity after high school but also helping older workers retrain for the jobs of the future because the economy is constantly adapting. (Applause.)

So community colleges are big. Community colleges are critical to our long-term success. What's also critical to our long-term success is the question of energy: How do we use less energy? How do we produce more energy right here in the United States of America?

And I know this is an especially important topic for everybody right now because you guys have to fill up at the gas station.

AUDIENCE: Yeah!

THE PRESIDENT: And it's rough. Gas prices and the world oil markets right now are putting a lot of pressure on families right now. And one of the things that is important to remember is for a lot of folks, just doing what you have to do to get your kids to school, to get to the job, to do grocery shopping

-- you don't have an option. You've got to be able to fill up that gas tank. And when prices spike on the world market, it's like a tax, it's like somebody is going into your pocket.

We passed the payroll tax at the beginning of this year to make sure that everybody had an extra \$40 in their paycheck, on average -- (applause) -- in part because we anticipated that gas prices might be going up like they did last year, given tight world oil supplies.

But that doesn't make it easier for a lot of families out there that are just struggling to get by. This is tough. Now, the question is, how do we meet this challenge? Because right now we're starting to see a lot of politicians talking a lot but not doing much. (Applause.) And we've seen this movie before. (Applause.) Gas prices went up around this time last year. Gas prices shot up in the spring and summer of 2008 -- I remember, I was running for President at the time. This has been going on for years now.

And every time prices start to go up -- especially in an election year -- politicians dust off their 3-point plans for \$2.00 gas. (Laughter.) I guess this year they decided, we're going to make it \$2.50. (Laughter.) I don't know where -- why not \$2.40? (Laughter.) Why not \$2.10? (Laughter.) But they tell the same story. They head down to the gas station; they make sure a few cameras are following them -- (laughter) -- and then they start acting like we've got a magic wand and we will give you cheap gas forever if you just elect us. (Laughter.) Every time. Been the same script for 30 years. It's like a bad rerun. (Laughter.)

Now, here's the thing -- because we've seen it all before, we know better. You know better. There is no such thing as a quick fix when it comes to high gas prices. There's no silver bullet. Anybody who tells you otherwise isn't really looking for a solution -- they're trying to ride the political wave of the moment.

Usually, the most common thing, when you actually ask them -- all right, how is it that you're going to get back to \$2.00 a gallon gas, how are you going to do it, specifically, what is your plan -- then typically what you'll hear from them is, well, if we just drilled more for oil then gas prices would immediately come down and all our problems would go away. That's usually the response.

Now, Maryland, there are two problems with that answer. First of all, we are drilling. Under my administration, America is producing more oil today than at any time in the last eight years. (Applause.) Any time. That's a fact. That's a fact. We've quadrupled the number of operating oil rigs to a record high. I want everybody to listen to that -- we have more oil rigs operating now than ever. That's a fact. We've approved dozens of new pipelines to move oil across the country. We announced our support for a new one in Oklahoma that will help get more oil down to refineries on the Gulf Coast.

Over the last three years, my administration has opened millions of acres of land in 23 different states for oil and gas exploration. (Applause.) Offshore, I've directed my administration to open up more than 75 percent of our potential oil resources. That includes an area in the Gulf of Mexico we opened up a few months ago that could produce more than 400 million barrels of oil.

So do not tell me that we're not drilling. (Applause.) We're drilling all over this country. (Applause.) I guess there are a few spots where we're not drilling. We're not drilling in the National Mall. (Laughter.) We're not drilling at your house. (Laughter.) I guess we could try to have, like, 200 oil rigs in the middle of the Chesapeake Bay.

AUDIENCE: No!

THE PRESIDENT: Well, that's the question. We are drilling at a record pace but we're doing so in a way that protects the health and safety and the natural resources of the American people. (Applause.)

So that's point number one. If you start hearing this "drill, baby, drill; drill, drill, drill" - if you start hearing that again, just remember you've got the facts -- we're doing that. Tell me something new. (Applause.) That's problem number one.

Here's the second problem with what some of these politicians are talking about. There's a problem with a strategy that only relies on drilling and that is, America uses more than 20 percent of the world's oil. If we drilled every square inch of this country -- so we went to your house and we went to the National Mall and we put up those rigs everywhere -- we'd still have only 2 percent of the world's known oil reserves. Let's say we miss something -- maybe it's 3 percent instead of 2. We're using 20; we have 2.

Now, you don't need to be getting an excellent education at Prince George's Community College to know that we've got a math problem here. (Laughter and applause.) I help out Sasha occasionally with her math homework and I know that if you've got 2 and you've got 20, there's a gap. (Laughter.) There's a gap, right?

AUDIENCE: Yes!

THE PRESIDENT: Do we have anybody who's good at math here? Am I right? (Applause.) Okay.

So if we don't develop other sources of energy, if we don't develop the technology to use less energy to make our economy more energy-efficient, then we will always be dependent on foreign countries for our energy needs. (Applause.)

And that means every time there's instability in the Middle East, which is the main thing that's driving oil prices up right now -- it's the same thing that was driving oil prices up last

year -- every time that happens, every time that there's unrest, any time that there's concern about a conflict, suddenly, oil futures shoot up, you're going to feel it at the pump. It will happen every single time.

We will not fully be in control of our energy future if our strategy is only to drill for the 2 percent but we still have to buy the 20 percent. And there's another wrinkle to this -- other countries use oil, too. We're not the only ones. So you've got rapidly-growing nations like China and India, and they're all starting to buy cars. They're getting wealthier. They want cars, too. And that means the price of gas will rise.

Just to give you an example -- in 2010, China alone added 10 million new cars. That's just in one year. And there are about a billion Chinese. So they've got a lot more people who are going to want cars in the future, which means they are going to want to get some of that oil and that will drive prices up. So we can't just drill our way out of the problem. We are drilling, but it's not going to solve our problem.

That's not the future I want for the United States of America. We can't allow ourselves to be held hostage to events on the other side of the globe. That's not who we are. (Applause.) America controls its own destiny. We're not dependent on somebody else. (Applause.)

So we can't have an energy strategy for the last century that traps us in the past. We need an energy strategy for the future -- an all-of-the-above strategy for the 21st century that develops every source of American-made energy. Yes, develop as much oil and gas as we can, but also develop wind power and solar power and biofuels. (Applause.) Make our buildings more fuel-efficient. Make our homes more fuel-efficient. Make our cars and trucks more fuel-efficient so they get more miles for the gallon. (Applause.) That's where I want to take this country. (Applause.)

And here's -- the best part of it is thousands of Americans have jobs right now because we've doubled the use of clean energy in this country since I came into office. And I want to

keep on making those investments. (Applause.) I don't want to see wind turbines and solar panels and high-tech batteries made in other countries by other workers. I want to make them here. (Applause.) I want to make them here in Maryland. I want to make them here in the United States of America, with American workers. That's what I want. (Applause.)

So when I came into office, we said, all right, how are we going to start moving America in that direction? It's not a thing you get done in one year, but how do we start moving in that direction? So after 30 years of not doing anything, we raised fuel economy standards on cars and trucks so that by the middle of the next decade, our cars will average nearly 55 miles per gallon -- that's double what we get today -- 55 miles per gallon. (Applause.) Fifty-five miles a gallon.

So the young people here who were driving those beaters that -- (laughter) -- getting 5 miles per gallon -- (laughter) -- we're going to get you to 55. And that will save the average family more than \$8,000 over the life of a car -- \$8,000. (Applause.) That will help pay some bills. That means you'll be able to fill up every two weeks instead of every week. (Applause.) And those are the cars we need to keep building here in the United States.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Yes, we can!

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, we can do that. (Applause.)

All right, so now, to fuel these cars and trucks, obviously if they're using less gas, that's great. That saves us; we're using less oil. But we also want to invest in clean advanced biofuels that can replace some of the oil that we're currently using. That's important. (Applause.)

Already, we're using these biofuels to power everything from city buses to UPS trucks to Navy ships. I want to see more of these fuels in American cars -- homegrown fuels -- because that means we're buying less oil from foreign countries and we're creating jobs here in the United States -- (applause) -- including big parts of rural America, big parts of rural

Maryland, where the economy oftentimes is struggling and you have a real opportunity to create entire new industries and put people to work. And it's happening all across the country.

So all of these steps have put us on a path of greater energy independence. Here's a statistic I want everybody to remember next time you're talking to somebody who doesn't know what they're talking about. (Laughter.) Since I took office, America's dependence on foreign oil has gone down every single year. (Applause.) In 2010, our oil dependence, the amount that we're bringing in, the percentage we're bringing in, was under 50 percent for the first time in 13 years. (Applause.) We've got to do better than that, and we can do better than that.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Yes, we can!

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, we can. (Applause.) But in order to do better than that, we've got to tell the folks who are stuck in the past that our future depends on this all-of-the-above energy strategy. That's our job. That it can't just be -- it can't just be drilling for more oil. We're drilling for more oil, but that can't be all the solution; that's just part of the solution.

Now, here's the sad thing. Lately, we've heard a lot of professional politicians, a lot of the folks who are running for a certain office -- (laughter) -- who shall go unnamed -- (laughter) -- they've been talking down new sources of energy. They dismiss wind power. They dismiss solar power. They make jokes about biofuels. They were against raising fuel standards. I guess they like gas-guzzlers. They think that's good for our future. We're trying to move towards the future; they want to be stuck in the past.

We've heard this kind of thinking before. Let me tell you something. If some of these folks were around when Columbus set sail -- (laughter) -- they must have been founding members of the Flat Earth Society. (Laughter.) They would not have believed that the world was round. (Applause.) We've heard these folks in the past. They probably would have agreed with one of the pioneers of the radio who said, "Television won't last. It's a flash in

the pan." (Laughter.) One of Henry Ford's advisors was quoted as saying, "The horse is here to stay but the automobile is only a fad." (Laughter.)

There have always been folks like that. There always have been folks who are the naysayers and don't believe in the future, and don't believe in trying to do things differently. One of my predecessors, Rutherford B. Hayes, reportedly said about the telephone, "It's a great invention, but who would ever want to use one?" (Laughter.) That's why he's not on Mt. Rushmore -- (laughter and applause) -- because he's looking backwards. He's not looking forwards. (Applause.) He's explaining why we can't do something, instead of why we can do something.

The point is, there will always be cynics and naysayers who just want to keep on doing things the same way that we've always done them. They want to double down on the same ideas that got us into some of the mess that we've been in. But that's not who we are as Americans. See, America has always succeeded because we refuse to stand still. We put faith in the future. We are inventors. We are builders. We are makers of things. We are Thomas Edison. We are the Wright Brothers. We are Bill Gates. We are Steve Jobs. That's who we are. (Applause.)

That's who we need to be right now. That's who we need to be right now. I don't understand when I hear folks who are in elected office, or aspiring to elected office, who ignore the facts and seem to just want to get a cute bumper sticker line, instead of actually trying to solve our problems. (Applause.)

What I just said about energy, by the way, is not disputed by any energy expert. Everybody agrees with this. So why is it that somebody who wants to help lead the country would be ignoring the facts? (Applause.)

If you want an example of what I'm talking about, consider an important issue that's before Congress right now.

I think somebody may have fainted. All right. Remember next time if you're going to stand for a long time, you got to eat. (Laughter.) I'm -- no, no, it's true. You got to get something to eat. You got to get some juice. I'm just saying. It's true. They'll be okay, just make sure to give them space.

The question -- there's a question before Congress I want everybody to know about. The question is whether or not we should keep giving \$4 billion in taxpayer subsidies to the oil industry.

AUDIENCE: No!

THE PRESIDENT: The oil industry has been subsidized by you, the taxpayer, for about a hundred years -- 100 years. One hundred years, a century. So some of the same folks who are complaining about biofuels getting subsidies, or wind or solar energy getting subsidies, or electric cars and advanced batteries getting subsidies to help get them off the ground, these same folks -- when you say, why are we still giving subsidies to the oil industry -- "well, no, we need those."

Oil companies are making more money right now than they've ever made. On top of the money they're getting from you at the gas station every time you fill up, they want some of your tax dollars as well.

That doesn't make any sense. Does it make sense?

AUDIENCE: No!

THE PRESIDENT: It's inexcusable. It is time for this oil industry giveaway to end. (Applause.) So in the next few weeks, I expect Congress to vote on ending these subsidies. And when they do, they'll put every single member of Congress on record. I guess you can stand up for the oil companies who really don't need much help, or they can stand up for the American people, because we can take that \$4 billion -- we could be investing it in clean

energy in a good energy future, in fuel efficiency. (Applause.) We could actually be trying to solve a vital problem.

They can bet -- they can place their bets on the energy of the past, or they can place their bets on America's future -- on American workers, American ingenuity, American technology, American science, American-made energy, American efficiency, American productivity. (Applause.) We can bet on America and our own capacity to solve this problem. (Applause.) That's the choice we face. That's what's at stake right now.

Maryland, we know what direction we have to go in.

AUDIENCE: Yes!

THE PRESIDENT: And every American out there, as frustrated as they are about gas prices right now, when you actually ask people, they'll tell you, yes, we've got to find new sources of energy. We got to find new ways of doing things. People understand that. We just got to get Washington to understand it. We got to get politicians to understand it.

We've got to invest in a serious, sustained, all-of-the-above energy strategy that develops every resource available for the 21st century. We've got to choose between the past and the future. And that's a choice we shouldn't be afraid to make because we've always bet on the future, and we're good at it. America is good at the future. We are good at being ahead of the curve. We're good at being on the cutting edge. (Applause.)

Ending these subsidies won't bring down gas prices tomorrow. Even if we drilled every inch of America, that won't bring gas prices down tomorrow. But if we're tired of watching gas prices spike every single year, and being caught in this position, where what happens in the Middle East ends up taking money out of your pocket, if we want to stabilize energy prices for the long term and the medium term, if we want America to grow, we're going to have look past what we've been doing and put ourselves on the path to a real, sustainable energy future.

That's the future you deserve. So I need all of you to make your voices heard. (Applause.) Get on the phone, write an email, send a letter, let your member of Congress know where you stand. Tell them to do the right thing. Tell them we can win this fight. Tell them we're going to combine our creativity and our optimism, our brainpower, our manpower, our womanpower. Tell them: Yes, we can. (Applause.)

Tell them we are going to build an economy that lasts. Tell them we're going to make this the American century just like the last century.

Thank you, Prince George's County. (Applause.) Thank you, Prince George's Community College. Thank you, Maryland. (Applause.) Let's get to work. God bless you. God bless America.

A.10 Transcription du texte 10

MRS. OBAMA: I am so thrilled and so honored and so proud to introduce the love of my life, the father of our two girls, and the President of the United States of America -- Barack Obama. (Applause.)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. (Applause.) Thank you. (Applause.) Thank you. Thank you so much.

AUDIENCE: Four more years! Four more years! Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you so much. Thank you. (Applause.) Thank you very much, everybody. Thank you.

Michelle, I love you so much. A few nights ago, everybody was reminded just what a lucky man I am. (Applause.) Malia and Sasha, we are so proud of you. And, yes, you do have to go to school in the morning. (Laughter.)

And, Joe Biden, thank you for being the very best Vice President I could have ever hoped for, and being a strong and loyal friend. (Applause.)

Madam Chairwoman, delegates, I accept your nomination for President of the United States. (Applause.)

Now, the first time I addressed this convention in 2004, I was a younger man, a Senate candidate from Illinois, who spoke about hope -- not blind optimism, not wishful thinking, but hope in the face of difficulty; hope in the face of uncertainty; that dogged faith in the future which has pushed this nation forward, even when the odds are great, even when the road is long.

Eight years later, that hope has been tested by the cost of war, by one of the worst economic crises in history, and by political gridlock that's left us wondering whether it's still even possible to tackle the challenges of our time.

I know campaigns can seem small, even silly sometimes. Trivial things become big distractions. Serious issues become sound bites. The truth gets buried under an avalanche of money and advertising. If you're sick of hearing me approve this message, believe me, so am I. (Laughter and applause.)

But when all is said and done -- when you pick up that ballot to vote -- you will face the clearest choice of any time in a generation. Over the next few years, big decisions will be made in Washington on jobs, the economy, taxes and deficits, energy, education, war and peace -- decisions that will have a huge impact on our lives and on our children's lives for decades to come.

And on every issue, the choice you face won't just be between two candidates or two parties. It will be a choice between two different paths for America, a choice between two fundamentally different visions for the future.

Ours is a fight to restore the values that built the largest middle class and the strongest economy the world has ever known -- (applause) -- the values my grandfather defended as a soldier in Patton's Army, the values that drove my grandmother to work on a bomber assembly line while he was gone.

They knew they were part of something larger -- a nation that triumphed over fascism and depression; a nation where the most innovative businesses turned out the world's best products. And everyone shared in that pride and success, from the corner office to the factory floor.

My grandparents were given the chance to go to college, buy their own home, and fulfill the basic bargain at the heart of America's story -- the promise that hard work will pay off, that responsibility will be rewarded, that everyone gets a fair shot and everyone does their fair share and everyone plays by the same rules from Main Street to Wall Street to Washington, D.C. (Applause.)

And I ran for President because I saw that basic bargain slipping away. I began my career helping people in the shadow of a shuttered steel mill at a time when too many good jobs were starting to move overseas. And by 2008, we had seen nearly a decade in which families struggled with costs that kept rising but paychecks that didn't; folks racking up more and more debt just to make the mortgage or pay tuition, put gas in the car or food on the table. And when the house of cards collapsed in the Great Recession, millions of innocent Americans lost their jobs, their homes, their life savings -- a tragedy from which we're still fighting to recover.

Now, our friends down in Tampa at the Republican Convention were more than happy to talk about everything they think is wrong with America. But they didn't have much to say about how they'd make it right. (Applause.) They want your vote, but they don't want you to know their plan. And that's because all they have to offer is the same prescriptions they've had for the last 30 years -- Have a surplus? Try a tax cut. Deficit too high? Try another. Feel a cold coming on? Take two tax cuts, roll back some regulations and call us in

the morning. (Applause.)

Now, I've cut taxes for those who need it -- middle-class families, small businesses. But I don't believe that another round of tax breaks for millionaires will bring good jobs to our shores or pay down our deficit. I don't believe that firing teachers or kicking students off financial aid will grow the economy, or help us compete with the scientists and engineers coming out of China. (Applause.)

After all we've been through, I don't believe that rolling back regulations on Wall Street will help the small businesswoman expand or the laid-off construction worker keep his home.

We have been there. We've tried that and we're not going back. We are moving forward, America. (Applause.)

Now, I won't pretend the path I'm offering is quick or easy. I never have. You didn't elect me to tell you what you wanted to hear. You elected me to tell you the truth. (Applause.)

And the truth is it will take more than a few years for us to solve challenges that have built up over decades. It will require common effort and shared responsibility, and the kind of bold, persistent experimentation that Franklin Roosevelt pursued during the only crisis worse than this one. (Applause.) And, by the way, those of us who carry on his party's legacy should remember that not every problem can be remedied with another government program or dictate from Washington.

But know this, America -- our problems can be solved. (Applause.) Our challenges can be met. The path we offer may be harder, but it leads to a better place. And I'm asking you to choose that future. (Applause.)

I'm asking you to rally around a set of goals for your country -- goals in manufacturing, energy, education, national security, and the deficit -- real, achievable plans that will lead to

new jobs, more opportunity and rebuild this economy on a stronger foundation. That's what we can do in the next four years -- and that is why I'm running for a second term as President of the United States. (Applause.)

AUDIENCE: Four more years! Four more years!

THE PRESIDENT: We can choose a future where we export more products and outsource fewer jobs. After a decade that was defined by what we bought and borrowed, we're getting back to basics, and doing what America has always done best: We are making things again. (Applause.)

I've met workers in Detroit and Toledo -- (applause) -- who feared they'd never build another American car. And today, they can't build them fast enough, because we reinvented a dying auto industry that's back on the top of the world. (Applause.)

I've worked with business leaders who are bringing jobs back to America -- not because our workers make less pay, but because we make better products. Because we work harder and smarter than anyone else. (Applause.)

I've signed trade agreements that are helping our companies sell more goods to millions of new customers -- goods that are stamped with three proud words: Made in America. (Applause.)

AUDIENCE: U.S.A! U.S.A.! U.S.A.!

THE PRESIDENT: And after a decade of decline, this country created over half a million manufacturing jobs in the last two and a half years.

And now you have a choice: We can give more tax breaks to corporations that ship jobs overseas, or we can start rewarding companies that open new plants and train new workers and create new jobs here, in the United States of America. (Applause.) We can help big

factories and small businesses double their exports, and if we choose this path, we can create a million new manufacturing jobs in the next four years. You can make that happen. You can choose that future.

You can choose the path where we control more of our own energy. After 30 years of inaction, we raised fuel standards so that by the middle of the next decade, cars and trucks will go twice as far on a gallon of gas. (Applause.) We have doubled our use of renewable energy, and thousands of Americans have jobs today building wind turbines and long-lasting batteries. In the last year alone, we cut oil imports by 1 million barrels a day -- more than any administration in recent history. And today, the United States of America is less dependent on foreign oil than at any time in the last two decades. (Applause.)

So now you have a choice -- between a strategy that reverses this progress, or one that builds on it. We've opened millions of new acres for oil and gas exploration in the last three years, and we'll open more. But unlike my opponent, I will not let oil companies write this country's energy plan, or endanger our coastlines, or collect another \$4 billion in corporate welfare from our taxpayers. We're offering a better path. (Applause.)

We're offering a better path, where we -- a future where we keep investing in wind and solar and clean coal; where farmers and scientists harness new biofuels to power our cars and trucks; where construction workers build homes and factories that waste less energy; where we develop a hundred-year supply of natural gas that's right beneath our feet. If you choose this path, we can cut our oil imports in half by 2020 and support more than 600,000 new jobs in natural gas alone. (Applause.)

And, yes, my plan will continue to reduce the carbon pollution that is heating our planet -- because climate change is not a hoax. More droughts and floods and wildfires are not a joke. They are a threat to our children's future. And in this election, you can do something about it. (Applause.)

You can choose a future where more Americans have the chance to gain the skills they need to compete, no matter how old they are or how much money they have. Education was

the gateway to opportunity for me. It was the gateway for Michelle. It was the gateway for most of you. And now more than ever, it is the gateway to a middle-class life.

For the first time in a generation, nearly every state has answered our call to raise their standards for teaching and learning. Some of the worst schools in the country have made real gains in math and reading. Millions of students are paying less for college today because we finally took on a system that wasted billions of taxpayer dollars on banks and lenders. (Applause.)

And now you have a choice -- we can gut education, or we can decide that in the United States of America, no child should have her dreams deferred because of a crowded classroom or a crumbling school. (Applause.) No family should have to set aside a college acceptance letter because they don't have the money. No company should have to look for workers overseas because they couldn't find any with the right skills here at home. That's not our future. That is not our future. (Applause.)

And government has a role in this. But teachers must inspire; principals must lead; parents must instill a thirst for learning. And, students, you've got to do the work. (Applause.) And together, I promise you, we can out-educate and out-compete any nation on Earth. (Applause.)

So help me. Help me recruit 100,000 math and science teachers within 10 years and improve early-childhood education. Help give 2 million workers the chance to learn skills at their community college that will lead directly to a job. (Applause.) Help us work with colleges and universities to cut in half the growth of tuition costs over the next 10 years. We can meet that goal together. You can choose that future for America. (Applause.) That's our future.

In a world of new threats and new challenges, you can choose leadership that has been tested and proven. Four years ago, I promised to end the war in Iraq. We did. (Applause.) I promised to refocus on the terrorists who actually attacked us on 9/11. And we have.

(Applause.) We've blunted the Taliban's momentum in Afghanistan, and in 2014, our longest war will be over. (Applause.)

A new tower rises above the New York skyline; al Qaeda is on the path to defeat; and Osama bin Laden is dead. (Applause.)

AUDIENCE: U.S.A.! U.S.A.! U.S.A.!

THE PRESIDENT: Tonight, we pay tribute to the Americans who still serve in harm's way. We are forever in debt to a generation whose sacrifice has made this country safer and more respected. We will never forget you. And so long as I'm Commander-in-Chief, we will sustain the strongest military the world has ever known. (Applause.) When you take off the uniform, we will serve you as well as you've served us -- because no one who fights for this country should have to fight for a job, or a roof over their heads, or the care that they need when they come home. (Applause.)

Around the world, we've strengthened old alliances and forged new coalitions to stop the spread of nuclear weapons. We've reasserted our power across the Pacific and stood up to China on behalf of our workers. From Burma to Libya to South Sudan, we have advanced the rights and dignity of all human beings -- men and women; Christians and Muslims and Jews. (Applause.)

But for all the progress that we've made, challenges remain. Terrorist plots must be disrupted. Europe's crisis must be contained. Our commitment to Israel's security must not waver, and neither must our pursuit of peace. (Applause.) The Iranian government must face a world that stays united against its nuclear ambitions. The historic change sweeping across the Arab world must be defined not by the iron fist of a dictator or the hate of extremists, but by the hopes and aspirations of ordinary people who are reaching for the same rights that we celebrate here today. (Applause.)

So now we have a choice. My opponent and his running mate are new to foreign policy

-- (laughter and applause) -- but from all that we've seen and heard, they want to take us back to an era of blustering and blundering that cost America so dearly.

After all, you don't call Russia our number-one enemy -- not al Qaeda -- Russia -- unless you're still stuck in a Cold War mind warp. (Applause.) You might not be ready for diplomacy with Beijing if you can't visit the Olympics without insulting our closest ally. (Applause.)

My opponent said that it was "tragic" to end the war in Iraq. And he won't tell us how he'll end the war in Afghanistan. Well, I have -- and I will. (Applause.)

And while my opponent would spend more money on military hardware that our Joint Chiefs don't even want, I will use the money we're no longer spending on war to pay down our debt and put more people back to work rebuilding roads and bridges and schools and runways. Because after two wars that have cost us thousands of lives and over a trillion dollars, it's time to do some nation-building right here at home. (Applause.)

You can choose a future where we reduce our deficit without sticking it to the middle class. Independent experts say that my plan would cut our deficit by \$4 trillion. And last summer I worked with Republicans in Congress to cut a billion [trillion] dollars in spending - - because those of us who believe government can be a force for good should work harder than anyone to reform it so that it's leaner and more efficient and more responsive to the American people. (Applause.)

I want to reform the tax code so that it's simple, fair, and asks the wealthiest households to pay higher taxes on incomes over \$250,000 -- the same rate we had when Bill Clinton was President; the same rate when our economy created nearly 23 million new jobs, the biggest surplus in history and a whole lot of millionaires to boot. (Applause.)

Now, I'm still eager to reach an agreement based on the principles of my bipartisan debt commission. No party has a monopoly on wisdom. No democracy works without compromise. I want to get this done, and we can get it done. But when Governor Romney

and his friends in Congress tell us we can somehow lower our deficits by spending trillions more on new tax breaks for the wealthy, well, what did Bill Clinton call it -- you do the arithmetic. (Applause.) You do the math. (Applause.)

I refuse to go along with that and as long as I'm President, I never will. (Applause.) I refuse to ask middle-class families to give up their deductions for owning a home or raising their kids just to pay for another millionaire's tax cut. (Applause.)

I refuse to ask students to pay more for college, or kick children out of Head Start programs, or eliminate health insurance for millions of Americans who are poor and elderly or disabled -- all so those with the most can pay less. I'm not going along with that. (Applause.)

And I will never -- I will never -- turn Medicare into a voucher. (Applause.) No American should ever have to spend their golden years at the mercy of insurance companies. They should retire with the care and the dignity that they have earned. Yes, we will reform and strengthen Medicare for the long haul, but we'll do it by reducing the cost of health care - - not by asking seniors to pay thousands of dollars more. (Applause.)

And we will keep the promise of Social Security by taking the responsible steps to strengthen it, not by turning it over to Wall Street. (Applause.)

This is the choice we now face. This is what the election comes down to. Over and over, we've been told by our opponents that bigger tax cuts and fewer regulations are the only way -- that since government can't do everything, it should do almost nothing. If you can't afford health insurance, hope that you don't get sick. If a company releases toxic pollution into the air your children breathe, well, that's the price of progress. If you can't afford to start a business or go to college, take my opponent's advice and borrow money from your parents. (Laughter and applause.)

You know what, that's not who we are. That's not what this country's about. As Americans, we believe we are endowed by our Creator with certain, inalienable rights --

rights that no man or government can take away. We insist on personal responsibility and we celebrate individual initiative. We're not entitled to success -- we have to earn it. We honor the strivers, the dreamers, the risk-takers, the entrepreneurs who have always been the driving force behind our free enterprise system, the greatest engine of growth and prosperity that the world's ever known.

But we also believe in something called citizenship. (Applause.) Citizenship: a word at the very heart of our founding; a word at the very essence of our democracy; the idea that this country only works when we accept certain obligations to one another and to future generations.

We believe that when a CEO pays his autoworkers enough to buy the cars that they build, the whole company does better. (Applause.) We believe that when a family can no longer be tricked into signing a mortgage they can't afford, that family is protected, but so is the value of other people's homes and so is the entire economy. (Applause.) We believe the little girl who's offered an escape from poverty by a great teacher or a grant for college could become the next Steve Jobs or the scientist who cures cancer or the President of the United States, and it is in our power to give her that chance. (Applause.)

We know that churches and charities can often make more of a difference than a poverty program alone. We don't want handouts for people who refuse to help themselves and we certainly don't want bailouts for banks that break the rules. (Applause.) We don't think that government can solve all of our problems, but we don't think that government is the source of all of our problems -- any more than are welfare recipients, or corporations, or unions, or immigrants, or gays, or any other group we're told to blame for our troubles. (Applause.)

Because, America, we understand that this democracy is ours. We, the people, recognize that we have responsibilities as well as rights; that our destinies are bound together; that a freedom which asks only "what's in it for me," a freedom without commitment to others, a freedom without love or charity or duty or patriotism is unworthy of our founding ideals and those who died in their defense. (Applause.)

As citizens, we understand that America is not about what can be done for us; it's about what can be done by us, together, through the hard and frustrating, but necessary work of self-government. That's what we believe. (Applause.)

So, you see, the election four years ago wasn't about me. It was about you. (Applause.) My fellow citizens, you were the change. (Applause.) You're the reason there's a little girl with a heart disorder in Phoenix who will get the surgery she needs because an insurance company can't limit her coverage. You did that. (Applause.)

You're the reason a young man in Colorado who never thought he'd be able to afford his dream of earning a medical degree is about to get that chance. You made that possible. (Applause.)

You're the reason a young immigrant who grew up here and went to school here and pledged allegiance to our flag will no longer be deported from the only country she's ever called home

-- (applause) -- why selfless soldiers won't be kicked out of the military because of who they are or who they love; why thousands of families have finally been able to say to the loved ones who served us so bravely: "Welcome home." "Welcome home." You did that. You did that. You did that. (Applause.)

If you turn away now -- if you buy into the cynicism that the change we fought for isn't possible, well, change will not happen. If you give up on the idea that your voice can make a difference, then other voices will fill the void -- the lobbyists and special interests; the people with the \$10 million checks who are trying to buy this election and those who are making it harder for you to vote; Washington politicians who want to decide who you can marry, or control health care choices that women should be making for themselves. (Applause.)

Only you can make sure that doesn't happen. Only you have the power to move us forward. (Applause.)

I recognize that times have changed since I first spoke to this convention. The times have changed, and so have I. I'm no longer just a candidate. I'm the President. (Applause.)

And that means I know what it means to send young Americans into battle, for I have held in my arms the mothers and fathers of those who didn't return. I've shared the pain of families who've lost their homes, and the frustration of workers who've lost their jobs.

If the critics are right that I've made all my decisions based on polls, then I must not be very good at reading them. (Laughter.) And while I'm very proud of what we've achieved together, I'm far more mindful of my own failings, knowing exactly what Lincoln meant when he said, "I have been driven to my knees many times by the overwhelming conviction that I had no place else to go." (Applause.)

But as I stand here tonight, I have never been more hopeful about America. Not because I think I have all the answers. Not because I'm naïve about the magnitude of our challenges. I'm hopeful because of you.

The young woman I met at a science fair who won national recognition for her biology research while living with her family at a homeless shelter -- she gives me hope. (Applause.)

The autoworker who won the lottery after his plant almost closed, but kept coming to work every day, and bought flags for his whole town, and one of the cars that he built to surprise his wife -- he gives me hope. (Applause.)

The family business in Warroad, Minnesota, that didn't lay off a single one of their 4,000 employees when the recession hit, even when their competitors shut down dozens of plants, even when it meant the owner gave up some perks and some pay because they understood that their biggest asset was the community and the workers who had helped build that business -- they give me hope. (Applause.)

I think about the young sailor I met at Walter Reed hospital, still recovering from a

grenade attack that would cause him to have his leg amputated above the knee. Six months ago, we would watch him walk into a White House dinner honoring those who served in Iraq, tall and 20 pounds heavier, dashing in his uniform, with a big grin on his face, sturdy on his new leg. And I remember how a few months after that I would watch him on a bicycle, racing with his fellow wounded warriors on a sparkling spring day, inspiring other heroes who had just begun the hard path he had traveled -- he gives me hope. He gives me hope. (Applause.)

I don't know what party these men and women belong to. I don't know if they'll vote for me. But I know that their spirit defines us. They remind me, in the words of Scripture, that ours is a "future filled with hope."

And if you share that faith with me -- if you share that hope with me -- I ask you tonight for your vote. (Applause.) If you reject the notion that this nation's promise is reserved for the few, your voice must be heard in this election. If you reject the notion that our government is forever beholden to the highest bidder, you need to stand up in this election. (Applause.)

If you believe that new plants and factories can dot our landscape, that new energy can power our future, that new schools can provide ladders of opportunity to this nation of dreamers; if you believe in a country where everyone gets a fair shot, and everyone does their fair share, and everyone plays by the same rules -- then I need you to vote this November. (Applause.)

America, I never said this journey would be easy, and I won't promise that now. Yes, our path is harder, but it leads to a better place. Yes, our road is longer, but we travel it together. We don't turn back. We leave no one behind. We pull each other up. We draw strength from our victories, and we learn from our mistakes, but we keep our eyes fixed on that distant horizon, knowing that Providence is with us, and that we are surely blessed to be citizens of the greatest nation on Earth.

Thank you. God bless you. (Applause.) And God bless these United States. (Applause.)

A.11 Transcription du « discours sur l'état de l'Union » de 2013

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Vice President, members of Congress, fellow citizens:

Fifty-one years ago, John F. Kennedy declared to this chamber that “the Constitution makes us not rivals for power but partners for progress.” (Applause.) “It is my task,” he said, “to report the State of the Union -- to improve it is the task of us all.”

Tonight, thanks to the grit and determination of the American people, there is much progress to report. After a decade of grinding war, our brave men and women in uniform are coming home. (Applause.) After years of grueling recession, our businesses have created over six million new jobs. We buy more American cars than we have in five years, and less foreign oil than we have in 20. (Applause.) Our housing market is healing, our stock market is rebounding, and consumers, patients, and homeowners enjoy stronger protections than ever before. (Applause.)

So, together, we have cleared away the rubble of crisis, and we can say with renewed confidence that the State of our Union is stronger. (Applause.)

But we gather here knowing that there are millions of Americans whose hard work and dedication have not yet been rewarded. Our economy is adding jobs -- but too many people still can't find full-time employment. Corporate profits have skyrocketed to all-time highs -- but for more than a decade, wages and incomes have barely budged.

It is our generation's task, then, to reignite the true engine of America's economic growth -- a rising, thriving middle class. (Applause.)

It is our unfinished task to restore the basic bargain that built this country -- the idea that if you work hard and meet your responsibilities, you can get ahead, no matter where you

come from, no matter what you look like, or who you love.

It is our unfinished task to make sure that this government works on behalf of the many, and not just the few; that it encourages free enterprise, rewards individual initiative, and opens the doors of opportunity to every child across this great nation. (Applause.)

The American people don't expect government to solve every problem. They don't expect those of us in this chamber to agree on every issue. But they do expect us to put the nation's interests before party. (Applause.) They do expect us to forge reasonable compromise where we can. For they know that America moves forward only when we do so together, and that the responsibility of improving this union remains the task of us all.

Our work must begin by making some basic decisions about our budget -- decisions that will have a huge impact on the strength of our recovery.

Over the last few years, both parties have worked together to reduce the deficit by more than \$2.5 trillion -- mostly through spending cuts, but also by raising tax rates on the wealthiest 1 percent of Americans. As a result, we are more than halfway towards the goal of \$4 trillion in deficit reduction that economists say we need to stabilize our finances.

Now we need to finish the job. And the question is, how?

In 2011, Congress passed a law saying that if both parties couldn't agree on a plan to reach our deficit goal, about a trillion dollars' worth of budget cuts would automatically go into effect this year. These sudden, harsh, arbitrary cuts would jeopardize our military readiness. They'd devastate priorities like education, and energy, and medical research. They would certainly slow our recovery, and cost us hundreds of thousands of jobs. That's why Democrats, Republicans, business leaders, and economists have already said that these cuts, known here in Washington as the sequester, are a really bad idea.

Now, some in Congress have proposed preventing only the defense cuts by making even

bigger cuts to things like education and job training, Medicare and Social Security benefits. That idea is even worse. (Applause.)

Yes, the biggest driver of our long-term debt is the rising cost of health care for an aging population. And those of us who care deeply about programs like Medicare must embrace the need for modest reforms -- otherwise, our retirement programs will crowd out the investments we need for our children, and jeopardize the promise of a secure retirement for future generations.

But we can't ask senior citizens and working families to shoulder the entire burden of deficit reduction while asking nothing more from the wealthiest and the most powerful. (Applause.) We won't grow the middle class simply by shifting the cost of health care or college onto families that are already struggling, or by forcing communities to lay off more teachers and more cops and more firefighters. Most Americans -- Democrats, Republicans, and independents -- understand that we can't just cut our way to prosperity. They know that broad-based economic growth requires a balanced approach to deficit reduction, with spending cuts and revenue, and with everybody doing their fair share. And that's the approach I offer tonight.

On Medicare, I'm prepared to enact reforms that will achieve the same amount of health care savings by the beginning of the next decade as the reforms proposed by the bipartisan Simpson-Bowles commission. (Applause.)

Already, the Affordable Care Act is helping to slow the growth of health care costs. (Applause.) And the reforms I'm proposing go even further. We'll reduce taxpayer subsidies to prescription drug companies and ask more from the wealthiest seniors. (Applause.) We'll bring down costs by changing the way our government pays for Medicare, because our medical bills shouldn't be based on the number of tests ordered or days spent in the hospital; they should be based on the quality of care that our seniors receive. (Applause.) And I am open to additional reforms from both parties, so long as they don't violate the guarantee of a secure retirement. Our government shouldn't make promises we cannot keep -

- but we must keep the promises we've already made. (Applause.)

To hit the rest of our deficit reduction target, we should do what leaders in both parties have already suggested, and save hundreds of billions of dollars by getting rid of tax loopholes and deductions for the well-off and the well-connected. After all, why would we choose to make deeper cuts to education and Medicare just to protect special interest tax breaks? How is that fair? Why is it that deficit reduction is a big emergency justifying making cuts in Social Security benefits but not closing some loopholes? How does that promote growth? (Applause.)

Now is our best chance for bipartisan, comprehensive tax reform that encourages job creation and helps bring down the deficit. (Applause.) We can get this done. The American people deserve a tax code that helps small businesses spend less time filling out complicated forms, and more time expanding and hiring -- a tax code that ensures billionaires with high-powered accountants can't work the system and pay a lower rate than their hardworking secretaries; a tax code that lowers incentives to move jobs overseas, and lowers tax rates for businesses and manufacturers that are creating jobs right here in the United States of America. That's what tax reform can deliver. That's what we can do together. (Applause.)

I realize that tax reform and entitlement reform will not be easy. The politics will be hard for both sides. None of us will get 100 percent of what we want. But the alternative will cost us jobs, hurt our economy, visit hardship on millions of hardworking Americans. So let's set party interests aside and work to pass a budget that replaces reckless cuts with smart savings and wise investments in our future. And let's do it without the brinksmanship that stresses consumers and scares off investors. (Applause.) The greatest nation on Earth cannot keep conducting its business by drifting from one manufactured crisis to the next. (Applause.) We can't do it.

Let's agree right here, right now to keep the people's government open, and pay our bills on time, and always uphold the full faith and credit of the United States of America. (Applause.) The American people have worked too hard, for too long, rebuilding from one

crisis to see their elected officials cause another. (Applause.)

Now, most of us agree that a plan to reduce the deficit must be part of our agenda. But let's be clear, deficit reduction alone is not an economic plan. (Applause.) A growing economy that creates good, middle-class jobs -- that must be the North Star that guides our efforts. (Applause.) Every day, we should ask ourselves three questions as a nation: How do we attract more jobs to our shores? How do we equip our people with the skills they need to get those jobs? And how do we make sure that hard work leads to a decent living?

A year and a half ago, I put forward an American Jobs Act that independent economists said would create more than 1 million new jobs. And I thank the last Congress for passing some of that agenda. I urge this Congress to pass the rest. (Applause.) But tonight, I'll lay out additional proposals that are fully paid for and fully consistent with the budget framework both parties agreed to just 18 months ago. Let me repeat -- nothing I'm proposing tonight should increase our deficit by a single dime. It is not a bigger government we need, but a smarter government that sets priorities and invests in broad-based growth. (Applause.) That's what we should be looking for.

Our first priority is making America a magnet for new jobs and manufacturing. After shedding jobs for more than 10 years, our manufacturers have added about 500,000 jobs over the past three. Caterpillar is bringing jobs back from Japan. Ford is bringing jobs back from Mexico. And this year, Apple will start making Macs in America again. (Applause.)

There are things we can do, right now, to accelerate this trend. Last year, we created our first manufacturing innovation institute in Youngstown, Ohio. A once-shuttered warehouse is now a state-of-the art lab where new workers are mastering the 3D printing that has the potential to revolutionize the way we make almost everything. There's no reason this can't happen in other towns.

So tonight, I'm announcing the launch of three more of these manufacturing hubs, where businesses will partner with the Department of Defense and Energy to turn regions left

behind by globalization into global centers of high-tech jobs. And I ask this Congress to help create a network of 15 of these hubs and guarantee that the next revolution in manufacturing is made right here in America. We can get that done. (Applause.)

Now, if we want to make the best products, we also have to invest in the best ideas. Every dollar we invested to map the human genome returned \$140 to our economy -- every dollar. Today, our scientists are mapping the human brain to unlock the answers to Alzheimer's. They're developing drugs to regenerate damaged organs; devising new material to make batteries 10 times more powerful. Now is not the time to gut these job-creating investments in science and innovation. Now is the time to reach a level of research and development not seen since the height of the Space Race. We need to make those investments. (Applause.)

Today, no area holds more promise than our investments in American energy. After years of talking about it, we're finally poised to control our own energy future. We produce more oil at home than we have in 15 years. (Applause.) We have doubled the distance our cars will go on a gallon of gas, and the amount of renewable energy we generate from sources like wind and solar -- with tens of thousands of good American jobs to show for it. We produce more natural gas than ever before -- and nearly everyone's energy bill is lower because of it. And over the last four years, our emissions of the dangerous carbon pollution that threatens our planet have actually fallen.

But for the sake of our children and our future, we must do more to combat climate change. (Applause.) Now, it's true that no single event makes a trend. But the fact is the 12 hottest years on record have all come in the last 15. Heat waves, droughts, wildfires, floods - all are now more frequent and more intense. We can choose to believe that Superstorm Sandy, and the most severe drought in decades, and the worst wildfires some states have ever seen were all just a freak coincidence. Or we can choose to believe in the overwhelming judgment of science -- and act before it's too late. (Applause.)

Now, the good news is we can make meaningful progress on this issue while driving

strong economic growth. I urge this Congress to get together, pursue a bipartisan, market-based solution to climate change, like the one John McCain and Joe Lieberman worked on together a few years ago. But if Congress won't act soon to protect future generations, I will. (Applause.) I will direct my Cabinet to come up with executive actions we can take, now and in the future, to reduce pollution, prepare our communities for the consequences of climate change, and speed the transition to more sustainable sources of energy.

Four years ago, other countries dominated the clean energy market and the jobs that came with it. And we've begun to change that. Last year, wind energy added nearly half of all new power capacity in America. So let's generate even more. Solar energy gets cheaper by the year -- let's drive down costs even further. As long as countries like China keep going all in on clean energy, so must we.

Now, in the meantime, the natural gas boom has led to cleaner power and greater energy independence. We need to encourage that. And that's why my administration will keep cutting red tape and speeding up new oil and gas permits. (Applause.) That's got to be part of an all-of-the-above plan. But I also want to work with this Congress to encourage the research and technology that helps natural gas burn even cleaner and protects our air and our water.

In fact, much of our new-found energy is drawn from lands and waters that we, the public, own together. So tonight, I propose we use some of our oil and gas revenues to fund an Energy Security Trust that will drive new research and technology to shift our cars and trucks off oil for good. If a nonpartisan coalition of CEOs and retired generals and admirals can get behind this idea, then so can we. Let's take their advice and free our families and businesses from the painful spikes in gas prices we've put up with for far too long.

I'm also issuing a new goal for America: Let's cut in half the energy wasted by our homes and businesses over the next 20 years. (Applause.) We'll work with the states to do it. Those states with the best ideas to create jobs and lower energy bills by constructing more efficient buildings will receive federal support to help make that happen.

America's energy sector is just one part of an aging infrastructure badly in need of repair. Ask any CEO where they'd rather locate and hire -- a country with deteriorating roads and bridges, or one with high-speed rail and Internet; high-tech schools, self-healing power grids. The CEO of Siemens America -- a company that brought hundreds of new jobs to North Carolina -- said that if we upgrade our infrastructure, they'll bring even more jobs. And that's the attitude of a lot of companies all around the world. And I know you want these job-creating projects in your district. I've seen all those ribbon-cuttings. (Laughter.)

So tonight, I propose a "Fix-It-First" program to put people to work as soon as possible on our most urgent repairs, like the nearly 70,000 structurally deficient bridges across the country. (Applause.) And to make sure taxpayers don't shoulder the whole burden, I'm also proposing a Partnership to Rebuild America that attracts private capital to upgrade what our businesses need most: modern ports to move our goods, modern pipelines to withstand a storm, modern schools worthy of our children. (Applause.) Let's prove that there's no better place to do business than here in the United States of America, and let's start right away. We can get this done.

And part of our rebuilding effort must also involve our housing sector. The good news is our housing market is finally healing from the collapse of 2007. Home prices are rising at the fastest pace in six years. Home purchases are up nearly 50 percent, and construction is expanding again.

But even with mortgage rates near a 50-year low, too many families with solid credit who want to buy a home are being rejected. Too many families who never missed a payment and want to refinance are being told no. That's holding our entire economy back. We need to fix it.

Right now, there's a bill in this Congress that would give every responsible homeowner in America the chance to save \$3,000 a year by refinancing at today's rates. Democrats and Republicans have supported it before, so what are we waiting for? Take a vote, and send me that bill. (Applause.) Why would we be against that? (Applause.) Why would that be a

partisan issue, helping folks refinance? Right now, overlapping regulations keep responsible young families from buying their first home. What's holding us back? Let's streamline the process, and help our economy grow.

These initiatives in manufacturing, energy, infrastructure, housing -- all these things will help entrepreneurs and small business owners expand and create new jobs. But none of it will matter unless we also equip our citizens with the skills and training to fill those jobs. (Applause.)

And that has to start at the earliest possible age. Study after study shows that the sooner a child begins learning, the better he or she does down the road. But today, fewer than 3 in 10 four year-olds are enrolled in a high-quality preschool program. Most middle-class parents can't afford a few hundred bucks a week for a private preschool. And for poor kids who need help the most, this lack of access to preschool education can shadow them for the rest of their lives. So tonight, I propose working with states to make high-quality preschool available to every single child in America. (Applause.) That's something we should be able to do.

Every dollar we invest in high-quality early childhood education can save more than seven dollars later on -- by boosting graduation rates, reducing teen pregnancy, even reducing violent crime. In states that make it a priority to educate our youngest children, like Georgia or Oklahoma, studies show students grow up more likely to read and do math at grade level, graduate high school, hold a job, form more stable families of their own. We know this works. So let's do what works and make sure none of our children start the race of life already behind. Let's give our kids that chance. (Applause.)

Let's also make sure that a high school diploma puts our kids on a path to a good job. Right now, countries like Germany focus on graduating their high school students with the equivalent of a technical degree from one of our community colleges. So those German kids, they're ready for a job when they graduate high school. They've been trained for the jobs that are there. Now at schools like P-Tech in Brooklyn, a collaboration between New York

Public Schools and City University of New York and IBM, students will graduate with a high school diploma and an associate's degree in computers or engineering.

We need to give every American student opportunities like this. (Applause.)

And four years ago, we started Race to the Top -- a competition that convinced almost every state to develop smarter curricula and higher standards, all for about 1 percent of what we spend on education each year. Tonight, I'm announcing a new challenge to redesign America's high schools so they better equip graduates for the demands of a high-tech economy. And we'll reward schools that develop new partnerships with colleges and employers, and create classes that focus on science, technology, engineering and math -- the skills today's employers are looking for to fill the jobs that are there right now and will be there in the future.

Now, even with better high schools, most young people will need some higher education. It's a simple fact the more education you've got, the more likely you are to have a good job and work your way into the middle class. But today, skyrocketing costs price too many young people out of a higher education, or saddle them with unsustainable debt.

Through tax credits, grants and better loans, we've made college more affordable for millions of students and families over the last few years. But taxpayers can't keep on subsidizing higher and higher and higher costs for higher education. Colleges must do their part to keep costs down, and it's our job to make sure that they do. (Applause.)

So tonight, I ask Congress to change the Higher Education Act so that affordability and value are included in determining which colleges receive certain types of federal aid. (Applause.) And tomorrow, my administration will release a new "College Scorecard" that parents and students can use to compare schools based on a simple criteria -- where you can get the most bang for your educational buck.

Now, to grow our middle class, our citizens have to have access to the education and

training that today's jobs require. But we also have to make sure that America remains a place where everyone who's willing to work -- everybody who's willing to work hard has the chance to get ahead.

Our economy is stronger when we harness the talents and ingenuity of striving, hopeful immigrants. (Applause.) And right now, leaders from the business, labor, law enforcement, faith communities -- they all agree that the time has come to pass comprehensive immigration reform. (Applause.) Now is the time to do it. Now is the time to get it done. Now is the time to get it done. (Applause.)

Real reform means strong border security, and we can build on the progress my administration has already made -- putting more boots on the Southern border than at any time in our history and reducing illegal crossings to their lowest levels in 40 years.

Real reform means establishing a responsible pathway to earned citizenship -- a path that includes passing a background check, paying taxes and a meaningful penalty, learning English, and going to the back of the line behind the folks trying to come here legally. (Applause.)

And real reform means fixing the legal immigration system to cut waiting periods and attract the highly-skilled entrepreneurs and engineers that will help create jobs and grow our economy. (Applause.)

In other words, we know what needs to be done. And as we speak, bipartisan groups in both chambers are working diligently to draft a bill, and I applaud their efforts. So let's get this done. Send me a comprehensive immigration reform bill in the next few months, and I will sign it right away. And America will be better for it. (Applause.) Let's get it done. Let's get it done.

But we can't stop there. We know our economy is stronger when our wives, our mothers, our daughters can live their lives free from discrimination in the workplace, and free

from the fear of domestic violence. Today, the Senate passed the Violence Against Women Act that Joe Biden originally wrote almost 20 years ago. And I now urge the House to do the same. (Applause.) Good job, Joe. And I ask this Congress to declare that women should earn a living equal to their efforts, and finally pass the Paycheck Fairness Act this year. (Applause.)

We know our economy is stronger when we reward an honest day's work with honest wages. But today, a full-time worker making the minimum wage earns \$14,500 a year. Even with the tax relief we put in place, a family with two kids that earns the minimum wage still lives below the poverty line. That's wrong. That's why, since the last time this Congress raised the minimum wage, 19 states have chosen to bump theirs even higher.

Tonight, let's declare that in the wealthiest nation on Earth, no one who works full-time should have to live in poverty, and raise the federal minimum wage to \$9.00 an hour. (Applause.) We should be able to get that done. (Applause.)

This single step would raise the incomes of millions of working families. It could mean the difference between groceries or the food bank; rent or eviction; scraping by or finally getting ahead. For businesses across the country, it would mean customers with more money in their pockets. And a whole lot of folks out there would probably need less help from government. In fact, working folks shouldn't have to wait year after year for the minimum wage to go up while CEO pay has never been higher. So here's an idea that Governor Romney and I actually agreed on last year -- let's tie the minimum wage to the cost of living, so that it finally becomes a wage you can live on. (Applause.)

Tonight, let's also recognize that there are communities in this country where no matter how hard you work, it is virtually impossible to get ahead. Factory towns decimated from years of plants packing up. Inescapable pockets of poverty, urban and rural, where young adults are still fighting for their first job. America is not a place where the chance of birth or circumstance should decide our destiny. And that's why we need to build new ladders of opportunity into the middle class for all who are willing to climb them.

Let's offer incentives to companies that hire Americans who've got what it takes to fill that job opening, but have been out of work so long that no one will give them a chance anymore. Let's put people back to work rebuilding vacant homes in run-down neighborhoods. And this year, my administration will begin to partner with 20 of the hardest-hit towns in America to get these communities back on their feet. We'll work with local leaders to target resources at public safety, and education, and housing.

We'll give new tax credits to businesses that hire and invest. And we'll work to strengthen families by removing the financial deterrents to marriage for low-income couples, and do more to encourage fatherhood -- because what makes you a man isn't the ability to conceive a child; it's having the courage to raise one. And we want to encourage that. We want to help that. (Applause.)

Stronger families. Stronger communities. A stronger America. It is this kind of prosperity -- broad, shared, built on a thriving middle class -- that has always been the source of our progress at home. It's also the foundation of our power and influence throughout the world.

Tonight, we stand united in saluting the troops and civilians who sacrifice every day to protect us. Because of them, we can say with confidence that America will complete its mission in Afghanistan and achieve our objective of defeating the core of al Qaeda. (Applause.)

Already, we have brought home 33,000 of our brave servicemen and women. This spring, our forces will move into a support role, while Afghan security forces take the lead. Tonight, I can announce that over the next year, another 34,000 American troops will come home from Afghanistan. This drawdown will continue and by the end of next year, our war in Afghanistan will be over. (Applause.)

Beyond 2014, America's commitment to a unified and sovereign Afghanistan will endure, but the nature of our commitment will change. We're negotiating an agreement with

the Afghan government that focuses on two missions -- training and equipping Afghan forces so that the country does not again slip into chaos, and counterterrorism efforts that allow us to pursue the remnants of al Qaeda and their affiliates.

Today, the organization that attacked us on 9/11 is a shadow of its former self. (Applause.) It's true, different al Qaeda affiliates and extremist groups have emerged -- from the Arabian Peninsula to Africa. The threat these groups pose is evolving. But to meet this threat, we don't need to send tens of thousands of our sons and daughters abroad or occupy other nations. Instead, we'll need to help countries like Yemen, and Libya, and Somalia provide for their own security, and help allies who take the fight to terrorists, as we have in Mali. And where necessary, through a range of capabilities, we will continue to take direct action against those terrorists who pose the gravest threat to Americans. (Applause.)

Now, as we do, we must enlist our values in the fight. That's why my administration has worked tirelessly to forge a durable legal and policy framework to guide our counterterrorism efforts. Throughout, we have kept Congress fully informed of our efforts. I recognize that in our democracy, no one should just take my word for it that we're doing things the right way. So in the months ahead, I will continue to engage Congress to ensure not only that our targeting, detention and prosecution of terrorists remains consistent with our laws and system of checks and balances, but that our efforts are even more transparent to the American people and to the world. (Applause.)

Of course, our challenges don't end with al Qaeda. America will continue to lead the effort to prevent the spread of the world's most dangerous weapons. The regime in North Korea must know they will only achieve security and prosperity by meeting their international obligations. Provocations of the sort we saw last night will only further isolate them, as we stand by our allies, strengthen our own missile defense and lead the world in taking firm action in response to these threats.

Likewise, the leaders of Iran must recognize that now is the time for a diplomatic solution, because a coalition stands united in demanding that they meet their obligations, and

we will do what is necessary to prevent them from getting a nuclear weapon. (Applause.)

At the same time, we'll engage Russia to seek further reductions in our nuclear arsenals, and continue leading the global effort to secure nuclear materials that could fall into the wrong hands -- because our ability to influence others depends on our willingness to lead and meet our obligations.

America must also face the rapidly growing threat from cyber-attacks. (Applause.) Now, we know hackers steal people's identities and infiltrate private emails. We know foreign countries and companies swipe our corporate secrets. Now our enemies are also seeking the ability to sabotage our power grid, our financial institutions, our air traffic control systems. We cannot look back years from now and wonder why we did nothing in the face of real threats to our security and our economy.

And that's why, earlier today, I signed a new executive order that will strengthen our cyber defenses by increasing information sharing, and developing standards to protect our national security, our jobs, and our privacy. (Applause.)

But now Congress must act as well, by passing legislation to give our government a greater capacity to secure our networks and deter attacks. This is something we should be able to get done on a bipartisan basis. (Applause.)

Now, even as we protect our people, we should remember that today's world presents not just dangers, not just threats, it presents opportunities. To boost American exports, support American jobs and level the playing field in the growing markets of Asia, we intend to complete negotiations on a Trans-Pacific Partnership. And tonight, I'm announcing that we will launch talks on a comprehensive Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership with the European Union -- because trade that is fair and free across the Atlantic supports millions of good-paying American jobs. (Applause.)

We also know that progress in the most impoverished parts of our world enriches us all -

- not only because it creates new markets, more stable order in certain regions of the world, but also because it's the right thing to do. In many places, people live on little more than a dollar a day. So the United States will join with our allies to eradicate such extreme poverty in the next two decades by connecting more people to the global economy; by empowering women; by giving our young and brightest minds new opportunities to serve, and helping communities to feed, and power, and educate themselves; by saving the world's children from preventable deaths; and by realizing the promise of an AIDS-free generation, which is within our reach. (Applause.)

You see, America must remain a beacon to all who seek freedom during this period of historic change. I saw the power of hope last year in Rangoon, in Burma, when Aung San Suu Kyi welcomed an American President into the home where she had been imprisoned for years; when thousands of Burmese lined the streets, waving American flags, including a man who said, "There is justice and law in the United States. I want our country to be like that."

In defense of freedom, we'll remain the anchor of strong alliances from the Americas to Africa; from Europe to Asia. In the Middle East, we will stand with citizens as they demand their universal rights, and support stable transitions to democracy. (Applause.)

We know the process will be messy, and we cannot presume to dictate the course of change in countries like Egypt, but we can -- and will -- insist on respect for the fundamental rights of all people. We'll keep the pressure on a Syrian regime that has murdered its own people, and support opposition leaders that respect the rights of every Syrian. And we will stand steadfast with Israel in pursuit of security and a lasting peace. (Applause.)

These are the messages I'll deliver when I travel to the Middle East next month. And all this work depends on the courage and sacrifice of those who serve in dangerous places at great personal risk — our diplomats, our intelligence officers, and the men and women of the United States Armed Forces. As long as I'm Commander-in-Chief, we will do whatever we must to protect those who serve their country abroad, and we will maintain the best military the world has ever known. (Applause.)

We'll invest in new capabilities, even as we reduce waste and wartime spending. We will ensure equal treatment for all servicemembers, and equal benefits for their families -- gay and straight. (Applause.) We will draw upon the courage and skills of our sisters and daughters and moms, because women have proven under fire that they are ready for combat.

We will keep faith with our veterans, investing in world-class care, including mental health care, for our wounded warriors -- (applause) -- supporting our military families; giving our veterans the benefits and education and job opportunities that they have earned. And I want to thank my wife, Michelle, and Dr. Jill Biden for their continued dedication to serving our military families as well as they have served us. Thank you, honey. Thank you, Jill. (Applause.)

Defending our freedom, though, is not just the job of our military alone. We must all do our part to make sure our God-given rights are protected here at home. That includes one of the most fundamental right of a democracy: the right to vote. (Applause.) When any American, no matter where they live or what their party, are denied that right because they can't afford to wait for five or six or seven hours just to cast their ballot, we are betraying our ideals. (Applause.)

So tonight, I'm announcing a nonpartisan commission to improve the voting experience in America. And it definitely needs improvement. I'm asking two long-time experts in the field -- who, by the way, recently served as the top attorneys for my campaign and for Governor Romney's campaign -- to lead it. We can fix this, and we will. The American people demand it, and so does our democracy. (Applause.)

Of course, what I've said tonight matters little if we don't come together to protect our most precious resource: our children. It has been two months since Newtown. I know this is not the first time this country has debated how to reduce gun violence. But this time is different. Overwhelming majorities of Americans -- Americans who believe in the Second Amendment -- have come together around common-sense reform, like background checks that will make it harder for criminals to get their hands on a gun. (Applause.) Senators of

both parties are working together on tough new laws to prevent anyone from buying guns for resale to criminals. Police chiefs are asking our help to get weapons of war and massive ammunition magazines off our streets, because these police chiefs, they're tired of seeing their guys and gals being outgunned.

Each of these proposals deserves a vote in Congress. (Applause.) Now, if you want to vote no, that's your choice. But these proposals deserve a vote. Because in the two months since Newtown, more than a thousand birthdays, graduations, anniversaries have been stolen from our lives by a bullet from a gun -- more than a thousand.

One of those we lost was a young girl named Hadiya Pendleton. She was 15 years old. She loved Fig Newtons and lip gloss. She was a majorette. She was so good to her friends they all thought they were her best friend. Just three weeks ago, she was here, in Washington, with her classmates, performing for her country at my inauguration. And a week later, she was shot and killed in a Chicago park after school, just a mile away from my house.

Hadiya's parents, Nate and Cleo, are in this chamber tonight, along with more than two dozen Americans whose lives have been torn apart by gun violence. They deserve a vote. They deserve a vote. (Applause.) Gabby Giffords deserves a vote. (Applause.) The families of Newtown deserve a vote. (Applause.) The families of Aurora deserve a vote. (Applause.) The families of Oak Creek and Tucson and Blacksburg, and the countless other communities ripped open by gun violence — they deserve a simple vote. (Applause.) They deserve a simple vote.

Our actions will not prevent every senseless act of violence in this country. In fact, no laws, no initiatives, no administrative acts will perfectly solve all the challenges I've outlined tonight. But we were never sent here to be perfect. We were sent here to make what difference we can, to secure this nation, expand opportunity, uphold our ideals through the hard, often frustrating, but absolutely necessary work of self-government.

We were sent here to look out for our fellow Americans the same way they look out for one another, every single day, usually without fanfare, all across this country. We should follow their example.

We should follow the example of a New York City nurse named Menchu Sanchez. When Hurricane Sandy plunged her hospital into darkness, she wasn't thinking about how her own home was faring. Her mind was on the 20 precious newborns in her care and the rescue plan she devised that kept them all safe.

We should follow the example of a North Miami woman named Desiline Victor. When Desiline arrived at her polling place, she was told the wait to vote might be six hours. And as time ticked by, her concern was not with her tired body or aching feet, but whether folks like her would get to have their say. And hour after hour, a throng of people stayed in line to support her -- because Desiline is 102 years old. (Applause.) And they erupted in cheers when she finally put on a sticker that read, "I voted." (Applause.)

We should follow the example of a police officer named Brian Murphy. When a gunman opened fire on a Sikh temple in Wisconsin and Brian was the first to arrive, he did not consider his own safety. He fought back until help arrived and ordered his fellow officers to protect the safety of the Americans worshipping inside, even as he lay bleeding from 12 bullet wounds. And when asked how he did that, Brian said, "That's just the way we're made."

That's just the way we're made. We may do different jobs and wear different uniforms, and hold different views than the person beside us. But as Americans, we all share the same proud title -- we are citizens. It's a word that doesn't just describe our nationality or legal status. It describes the way we're made. It describes what we believe. It captures the enduring idea that this country only works when we accept certain obligations to one another and to future generations, that our rights are wrapped up in the rights of others; and that well into our third century as a nation, it remains the task of us all, as citizens of these United States, to be the authors of the next great chapter of our American story.

Thank you. God bless you, and God bless these United States of America. (Applause.)

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